6

Grand Addressees in Odes *1–3 Order of Poems:* Dispositio *and its Effects*

Those who received Odes or Epistles from Horace 'include all the greatest names of the Augustan Age'.[1] 'Horace's odes in general are written for *principes viri* rather than their sons (who figure more prominently in the epistles).'[2] I quote two cohering views. By contrast: 'Horace was not anxious to solicit the eminent <in *Odes* 1–3> . . . His friendship and sympathy went to younger men, endowed with social gifts and an inclination towards the Muses.' This last is Syme's view, amply documented, and, for Books 1–3 at least, is clearly in large part right – though it causes one the odd qualm.[3] One of Syme's novel ways of illustrating his point is by referring to public men, particularly military men, who do not receive the attention of an ode.[4] Book 4 will make comparatively more frequent forays into the aristocracy (as Syme shows); but for this there are particular reasons (cf. Ch. 11).

1. Wilkinson *Horace and his Lyric Poetry* 53.
2. Nisbet – Hubbard I.301 on *Ode* 1.26 (to Lamia). Contrast Syme *The Augustan Aristocracy* 394 on the Lamiae in *Odes* 1.26, 1.36, 3.17, and *Epist.* 1.14. Not unreasonably he assumes one Lamia to be in play, disputes that it can be the future consul of A.D. 3 (too young), and supposes a younger brother of the legate of Hispana Citerior of 24 B.C.: someone uninterested in public affairs. This is plausible. Horace gives no sign that his Lamia is interested in public affairs.
3. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 386; see too the following pages. On p. 392 he says: 'Apart from Messalla Corvinus and the augur Murena, no aristocrat is certified in the three books.' Clearly Syme is using 'aristocrat' very strictly (=*nobilis* in the sense identified by Gelzer in *The Roman Nobility*). Nevertheless one might have thought that Augustus (*Ode* 1.2) would have rated a mention; however Cicero's careful reply to Antonius' jibe that Octavian was 'ignoble' is worth noting: *Phil.* 3.15, cf. Gelzer *The Roman Nobility* 32. Syme's further and explanatory point that 'Horace was a client of Maecenas and he lent fervent advocacy to a programme of moral regeneration, loyally anticipating what was not enacted until the Julian laws of 18. Aristocrats disliked being regimented and molested by governmental ordinances, not least when appeal was made to . . . Sabine frugality' is suggestive, if not convincing in all aspects.
4. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 393.

But from Syme's statement, there arises an interesting question: Which of the comparatively few grandees[5] honoured by Horace in Books 1–3 get what Odes? And when? 'When' (*dispositio*)[6] matters. A glance at the opening poems of both Books 1 and 3, for example, shows that the beginning of a book is a position of honour and importance. Book 4 suggests the same significance for the last poem (likewise 2.20 and 3.30, but to somewhat different purpose). *Odes* 1.20 and 3.16, beginning the second halves of their respective books and addressed to Maecenas, suggest that these positions too are honorific – and have implications for the Quinctius of 2.11.[7] But nothing, be it noted, suggests that the poem which concludes the first half of a book occupies any special position.[8] And then there are the subtler matters of disposition. Not only 'When?' (near the beginning of a book for example), but 'Alongside What?' Odes, like people, may be sensitive about the company they keep.

To begin at the beginning. *Ode* 1.1 is suitably and expectedly addressed to Maecenas, Horace's saviour and patron. And Maecenas was not only important to Horace. He was important in the state. No *nobilis* of course, not even a senator, he remained an equestrian by design. Augustus greatly valued equestrian advisors, for good and identifiable reasons, and until the late twenties Maecenas was – it can be argued – the most important of these.[9] Noticeably Horace chooses not to try to formulate Maecenas' political and diplomatic importance. Unofficial, it was best left unstated. Horace

5. I have fallen back on a term not intended to be technical (contrast Syme's use of 'aristocrat', n. 3). Great equestrian advisors to the *princeps* (Maecenas, Sallustius Crispus), a consul, consulars (Sestius, Asinius Pollio, etc.): I mean these sort of men by 'grandee'.
6. *Dispositio* could be the decisive factor in a speech: cf. e.g. Cic. *Rhet. Her.* 3.18 *haec dispositio locorum, tamquam instructio militum, facillime in dicendo, sicut illa in pugnando, parere poterit uictoriam.* And Vergil, for example, had already appreciated that the disposition of poems in a book (*Eclogues*) could have appreciable tactical value. For good ancient references on rhetorical *dispositio* (*ordo*) and for the small evidence for its role in ancient literary theorists, see Brink II.127–8.
7. To Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 386 he may be a senator of lesser degree. Nisbet – Hubbard ad loc. argue with agility that he may be the brother-in-law of Asinius Pollio, who married a Quinctia: so, *Ode* 2.1 to Pollio, *Ode* 2.11 to his brother-in-law, a pleasing structure.
8. There is no structural reason therefore to find any luminary in the Licinius of *Ode* 2.10 – and many other reasons not to. (If we assumed that the Licinius of 2.10 *was* the great L. Terentius Varro Murena, we might have to suppose the last poem of the first half of the book was an honorific position; and this Books 1 and 3 do not bear out.) The main reason to suppose that the Licinius of 2.10 is not the noble conspirator rests in conventions of Roman nomenclature: see Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 389–91. And to suppose that he is the conspirator creates grave problems of chronology, to which the massive introduction to *Ode* 2.10 in Nisbet – Hubbard testifies.
9. See the appendix on Maecenas at the end of Ch. 7.

takes refuge in the safe, definite, uncontroversial praise *atauis edite regibus*, 'sprung from kingly ancestors'.[10]

A couple of other details in the poem may be noted. First, in line 2: *o et praesidium et dulce decus meum*, 'Oh both my bulwark and sweet glory', we duly find the honorific *o* and the *decus* and *praesidium* which suit a protecting and magnificent patron.[11] We also find *dulce*: a term of personal warmth and affection.[12] Horace alludes to the friendship (*amicitia*) which, he hopes or knows, is now part of their relationship (*amicitia*) as patron and client.[13] Tentatively he had essayed such tactics in *Satire* 1.6. He will do so with increasing confidence in the Odes that follow.

Ode 1.1 is in form a priamel, executed with originality, and combined with a touch of *mempsimoiria* ('discontent with one's lot'):[14] 'other men find their delight in one thing, others in another; *my* delight is in the Muses'. But, on the face of it, the conclusion is oddly phrased (lines 29ff.):

> me doctarum hederae praemia frontium
> dis miscent superis . . .
> . . .
> . . . si neque tibias (32)
> Euterpe cohibet nec Polyhymnia
> Lesboum refugit tendere barbiton.
> quodsi me lyricis uatibus inseres,
> sublimi feriam sidera uertice.

Me the ivy, reward of poets' brows, mingles with the gods above . . . if Euterpe does not withhold the pipe nor Polyhymnia refuse to tune the Lesbian lyre. But (and?) if you will include me among the lyric bards, I shall strike the stars with my exalted head.

The *si* clause of 32–4 is surely a formality. It is deferential and apotropaic perhaps, but we should be in no doubt of what is being claimed:[15] Horace

10. Cf. e.g. Prop. 3.9.1 *Maecenas eques Etrusco de sanguine regum*. Horace picks up the motif in 3.29.1, to effect: see p. 72.
11. For both *praesidium* and *decus* see Nisbet – Hubbard ad loc. On *praesidium* see too Gelzer *The Roman Nobility* 65f.
12. See Syndikus *Die Lyrik des Horaz* I.26, with good documentation of the tone and usage of the word.
13. On *amicitia* as a word for the client – patron relationship, see above p. 15.
14. On the 'priamel' form, see Nisbet – Hubbard I.2f. For the touch of *mempsimoiria*, see lines 15–18. For other orginalities in the execution of the priamel see Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.24, 27ff., West *Reading Horace* 78. The most pleasing Horatian originality is the touch of satire he works into the occupations of other men. As West succinctly points out, 'The charioteer is a dust collector.'
15. A contrary opinion in Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.34. Nisbet – Hubbard on 1.1.32 are nearer the mark: 'the conditional clause expresses cautiously a hope for continuing inspiration; the understatement is continued . . .'.

is favoured by the Muses and in consequence 'mingles with the gods'. So, after this, a return to Maecenas (line 35) may seem bathos.[16] The connective *quodsi* may also seem puzzling.[17] Unexpected items these may be, but the lines are not corrupt.[18] One difficulty can be swiftly dismissed. If *quodsi* seems an inappropriate adversative, Horatian practice rapidly shows that *quodsi* was not necessarily an adversative. '*And* if' is often the correct translation.

And the return to Maecenas is not bathos.[19] What we have is – not bathos – but, arguably, a magnificent and startling tribute to the great man. Horace depends upon, and enjoys, the favour of the Muses and in consequence 'mingles with the gods'. But his ultimate and amazing honour, inclusion within the canon of Greek lyric poets, depends upon Maecenas. And if that happens, then Horace's fame, pride, and happiness will know no bounds: *sublimi feriam sidera uertice*.[20] What Maecenas can do for him is even greater than the favour afforded by the Muses. The poem closes as it opened, honouring the great patron: neat ring-composition.[21]

To understand this fully, we have to appreciate that there is an important cultural fact in play here: the sheer audacity, or apparent audacity, of even suggesting the possibility of canonization as one of the *lyrici*. As Feeney has recently stressed, anyone, most of all a Latin poet, who envisaged admission to the canon of the nine Greek lyric poets, a canon fixed since Alexandrian times, was stretching self-esteem to a most extraordinary point.[22]

Of course Horace's wild ambition may not be totally serious.[23] More important to our immediate purpose is the point that we have just noted:

16. Cf. A.Y. Campbell quoted by Nisbet – Hubbard ad loc., who do not subscribe to the view. But presumably Shackleton Bailey also senses bathos: his emended text (see n. 18) removes the return to Maecenas.
17. It is emended to *chordis* by Bergk: see next note.
18. Shackleton Bailey in the Teubner text writes in the apparatus *text. recept., quem pro corrupto habeo, tamen reliqui. melius, opinor, sic* (a text based on conjectures of his own and Bergk): *secernunt populo. si . . . nec Polyhymnia/ Lesbois refugit tendere barbiton/chordis, me lyricis uatibus inserens/ . . . uertice*. This removes the 'bathos' of the return to Maecenas.
19. A rather different, but interesting, explanation of why the last two lines may constitute the 'high point' in Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.34–5. Nisbet – Hubbard deny bathos in their commentary, not very usefully; Nisbet in his review of Shackleton Bailey 230 offers a more cogent defence of the transmitted text.
20. A variant on a proverbial phrase, implying it seems to me all the ingredients I mention: fame, sense of achievement, pride, happiness. See Nisbet – Hubbard ad loc., Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.34 with n. 50, Shackleton Bailey on Cic. *Att.* 2.1.7. The extravagance of the image lent it to ironic usage, as Syndikus points out. See n. 23.
21. Cf. n. 23.
22. Feeney in Rudd (ed.) *Horace 2000* 41 and ff. Cf. Pfeiffer *History of Classical Scholarship* 205.
23. As Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.34 aptly points out, the expression *sublimi feriam sidera uertice* is not free of irony. It is also pertinent to remember (cf. Syndikus

Horace's insertion into this canon depends upon Maecenas: the wildly ambitious possibility mooted in line 35 may be read as a tribute to the great man's literary influence.

When we consider *Ode* 1.1 there are other poems and passages to bring into play. *Prima dicte mihi, summa dicende Camena*, 'you who have been uttered by my first Muse, who are to be uttered by my last Muse': so says Horace at *Epistle* 1.1.1. Honorific formulae like this have a pedigree that goes back to Homer.[24] It may seem unfair to interpret it in a strict and narrow sense – and then to take it out of context. But it admits a strict and narrow sense, or it could imply a strict and narrow sense, and that would be: my first poem in my book – or my total *oeuvre* – will be to you, and so will my last (the last position in a book was an honorific position as we noted above). But consider *Epistles* Book 1. We notice straight away that the first poem of the book is to Maecenas, but the last is not; the penultimate poem is. And this slight displacement – as Horace directs *Epistle* 1.19 to Maecenas, then turns to consider the fame and fate of *his* book in *Epistle* 1.20 – can strike one as a flicker of self-assertion, especially when one notices that 1.19 too is actually all about Horace.[25] Perhaps more than a flicker. We could contrast Theocritus.[26]

Return to *Odes* Books 1–3, published as a single collection. We find the same situation. *Ode* 1.1 is to Maecenas, and the penultimate poem, 3.29, is to Maecenas; but the ultimate poem, occupying the honorific position, is not to Maecenas, it is all about Horace. Metre underlines the fact of displacement. The Lesser Asclepiads of 1.1 are repeated but once in Books 1–3, in 3.30, but this metrical ring-composition is not accompanied by ring-composition of addressee. Further underlinement: 3.29.1 does repeat the motif of 1.1.1. And perhaps Maecenas' displacement – his relegation to the penultimate poem – has an added significance in the more public collection of the *Odes* than it has in the *Epistles*. We may be inclined to attach

I.30, La Penna *Orazio e l'ideologia del principato* 217f.) that the poem's ring-composition structure (and parallels of motif) align Horace's previous proud claim (mixing with the gods, etc., 29ff.) with the dusted pretensions of Olympic victors: lines 1–2 Maecenas, 3–6 Olympic victors and their elevation to the gods by the 'palm', 29–34 Horace, his mixing with the gods because of the 'ivy', 35–6 Maecenas. So: further possible undermining of Horace's apparently proud claims in the sheer structure of the poem.

24. Cf. e.g. *Il.* 9.97, Theoc. *Id.* 17.1.
25. See Ch. 8 pp. 155–7.
26. Theocritus begins *Id.* 17 with Horace's honorific formula, applied to Zeus. 'From Zeus let us begin and with Zeus, Muses, let us end, for of immortals he is best.' Then he says, 'but of men let Ptolemy be named, first, last, and in the midst, for of men he is most excellent'. The reference to Ptolemy seems specific to this, a single encomiastic poem (unlike Horace's reference to Maecenas in *Epist.* 1.1.1); and in *Id.* 17 Ptolemy is indeed 'of men named first, last (135f.), and in the midst'. And, for that matter, the poem ends with Zeus (137): 'but for excellence pray to Zeus'.

considerable significance to it when we consider the nature of the last two poems. *Ode* 3.29, to Maecenas, is in very familiar, one is tempted to say 'patronizing' mode (more on this anon). *Ode* 3.30 is not only all about Horace but mightily proud: it is the unabashed, or only slightly abashed,[27] self-praising *sphragis* of *exegi monumentum*.[28]

So the self-assertion here – when seen, noted and evaluated – is arguably stronger than in *Epistles* 1. A blunt interpretation of Horace's policy with this item of *dispositio* in *Odes* 1–3 might be: 'Prima dicta mihi summa *non* dicende Camena – for the last and honorific place is for *me*.'[29] Perhaps Horace's wild ambition (to be admitted to the canon) was not so unserious, and not so purely designed in its phrasing to suggest a tribute to Maecenas and Maecenas alone.[30]

I shall return to other Maecenas poems in the next chapter. I now consider the other poems that open Book 1. The beginning of books as I have said offers positions of importance. The beginning of Book 1 might be presumed to offer the positions of greatest importance.

After the first poem, inevitably to Maecenas, a second poem[31] whose protagonist is likewise predetermined: Augustus. The poem is about Augustus rather than to him. Only when the *princeps* has cautiously been seen in the figure of Mercury incarnate, does Horace adopt the 'Du' form: line 45, *serus in caelum redeas* . . . etc. (see pp. 47–9). In Books 1–3 Horace generally avoids the tricky business of how to address the emperor directly.[32]

I pass by *Ode* 3 for the moment. *Ode* 4[33] addresses the consul suffectus of the year 23 B.C. A consul suffectus deserves honour; and Horace's politesse in this matter has the added advantage for us that we can thereby exactly date publication of the collection: to the second half of the year 23 B.C., when Sestius took over office from Augustus, previously consul. But why Sestius received Horace's tribute, and not Cn. Calpurnius Piso who had been consul all year,[34] is a question which perhaps deserves more attention

27. Lines 10ff. *dicar, qua uiolens obstrepit Aufidus/et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium/regnauit populorum*, i.e. 'I shall be renowned in . . . Apulia' (his home district).
28. The fact that Maecenas is not addressed in *Ode* 3.30 is noted by Fraenkel *Horace* 229f., Syndikus *Die Lyrik* II.250 but without, for me, any satisfactory explanation.
29. The impact of Horace's *dispositio* is seen very differently by, for example, Fraenkel *Horace* 228.
30. Cf. the comments of West *Reading Horace* 78f.
31. This poem is discussed above Ch. 4 pp. 43–9.
32. See Ch. 11 pp. 195–8.
33. Discussed above Ch. 5 pp. 65–7.
34. Assuming that the A. Terentius Varro Murena of the Capitoline Fasti never took office: cf. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 388f.

than it gets.[35] Both men were in many respects similar: both had republican pasts,[36] and both had in recent years been inactive and undistinguished.[37] And of course both would have dated the collection to the year 23 B.C. But Piso, Augustus' consular colleague since the beginning of the year and the man to whom the *princeps*, not expecting to recover from illness in 23 B.C., had entrusted the inventory of the state's forces and revenues (this all happened before the suffect consulship of Sestius), was surely the more obvious *laudandus*, a more significant figure.[38]

Reasons for Horace's choice can be found. A potent factor will I think have been diplomatic and political. Augustus' resignation and the appointment of Sestius as suffectus rebounded extremely well on the *princeps* – it was an astute move at a time of crisis – and a dedication to the suffectus reminded the reading public of Augustus' selflessly creditable action. Here is Dio's account of what happened (this is after Augustus' illness in the first part of 23 B.C., the handing over of state papers to Piso and the episode with Agrippa,[39] and Augustus' cure), 53.32.3–4:

> Having settled these matters each in turn, he went to the Alban Mount and resigned the consulship. For ever since conditions had become settled, both he himself and most of his colleagues had held office throughout the year, and he now wanted to end this practice, in order that as many as possible might become consuls; and he resigned outside the city in order that he might not be prevented from his intention. For this act he received praise, and also because he chose in his place Lucius Sestius, who had always been an enthusiastic follower of Brutus, had fought with him in all his wars, and even at this time

35. It is merely noted by Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 381. Cf. too *Augustan Aristocracy* 383. Observing that the 'fourth poem owes its position to an extraneous fact, L. Sestius becoming consul suffect for the second half of the year 23', Syme writes: 'It was not written to honour a consul or consul designate, as might happen . . . It serves to indicate the publication year of the first three books.' But a poem to Piso would have 'served to indicate the publication year', and Piso on the face of it was, as I say below, a more significant figure.
36. This was not unuseful in Augustus' colleague: it advertised *clementia* and the 'normality' of the new regime. On Piso see the vivid and interesting information in Tac. *Ann.* 2.43.3; on Sestius see Nisbet – Hubbard on *Ode* 1.4.14, and below.
37. Again useful. Republican image, but not much else. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 384.
38. For Piso's being consul all year, see n. 34 above. For the ailing *princeps* entrusting him with the inventory of the state's forces and revenues, see Dio 53.30.2; this however was at the same time that Augustus gave his ring to Agrippa, Dio loc. cit. – on the significance of which action, see Dio 53.31.3 and f. Of course, writing the poem to Sestius and not to Piso does, as I say above, date publication of the collection to the second half of 23 B.C., pleasant for us literary historians. But can this have been Horace's only motive?
39. Augustus gave Agrippa his signet ring. See previous note for the evidence and significance of this action.

> kept alive his memory, possessing images of him and delivering eulogies of him.

Of course for this selfless act, the senate voted Augustus compensatory powers of an utterly satisfactory kind (Dio 53.32.5–6).[40] Compensatory powers there were, but Augustus did discontinue his stranglehold on the consulship, and this stranglehold had caused discontent;[41] and his choice of suffect was, in the circumstances, inspired. Horace's honouring of Sestius honours – at least it marks – Augustus' astute political gesture and his initiation of a popular change of policy.

There may be another more trivial factor suggesting the choice of Sestius as consular *laudandus*. As a general rule, Horace likes to 'advise' important people to do what they are doing already, or think they are doing.[42] After the three serious, or apparently serious,[43] Odes opening Book 1, Horace may have thought it time for something light and sympotic. Perhaps Sestius was the man for a symposium, and a man who liked to drink, make love and be merry.[44] And so Horace 'advises' him to – and is enabled to write his desired lighter poem. So: the consul suffectus, who deserved honour, gets it in a mode congenial to him. Horace gets *uariatio*. And an Augustan reform is registered.

Again there is an Ode to pass by for the moment (1.5). *Ode* 6 addresses another very obvious grandee, Augustus' general and future son-in-law,[45] M. Agrippa – whom in his illness of 23 B.C. Augustus seems to have designated as his successor.[46] Horace affords the great general comparative pride of place; but the Ode is teasing (I select salient details only).[47] Perhaps Agrippa could take a joke – or not see a joke.

In *Ode* 1.6 Horace declines to write an epic about Agrippa, while alluding to his great military exploits. The poem is cast in the form pioneered by Vergil in *Eclogue* 6, in the motif which we call the 'recusatio' (see Ch. 3 appendix). Vergil pioneered this graceful and witty way of declining an epic

40. Bibliography on these new powers in Rich's note on Dio 53.32.5.
41. See Rich on 53.32.3.
42. See Nisbet – Hubbard II.3–4 'Sometimes the great man is encouraged to adopt a position that he holds already, or thinks he holds . . .' etc.
43. *Ode* 1.3 may, on my interpretation, be only apparently serious. See below.
44. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 390 and 396 compares Sestius to the Manlius Torquatus of *Ode* 4.7, whom, with some textual warrant, he conjectures to have been an Epicurean.
45. In 21 B.C. he married Augustus' daughter Julia; in 28 B.C. he had married Augustus' niece Marcella, whom he divorced.
46. Above n. 38.
47. Good comment in Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.86ff. who interestingly compares, and contrasts, Ibycus fr. 1 P. Nisbet – Hubbard have excellent notes on *stomachum* (6) and *duplicis* (7), and the implications of these modes of referring to Achilles and Odysseus. Commager *The Odes of Horace* 71–2 finds a much politer 'recusatio' than I do.

poem on a military figure, but (as I have argued in the appendix referred to) it soon came to be considered a particularly elegiac mode of excuse. We may make an immediate and general inference. Horace had no high opinion of the Elegists (see below), but he adopts the unadmired Elegists' method to decline Agrippa's poem: hardly respectful of the great general.

And Horace adapts the basic ingredients of the original 'recusatio' into a humorous form. 'I would write about your military exploits,' he says, 'if I could. But *pudor* and the *imbellis lyrae Musa* forbid me; parties, and the battles of love are my province.' The admonitory Apollo of the original 'recusatio' has had his role humorously transferred to *pudor* and *imbellis lyrae Musa*, to a 'sense of modesty' and the 'Muse of the unwarlike lyre'. In *Satire* 2.1 Horace had declined eulogy for a tactful reason: a feeling of inability (see above p. 38). Here the appeal to modesty may strike one as similarly tactful. Or we may already detect a tone of mock-modesty. But it is time to quote the whole Ode:

scriberis Vario fortis et hostium
uictor Maeonii carminis alite,
quam rem cumque ferox nauibus aut equis
  miles te duce gesserit:

nos, Agrippa, neque haec dicere nec grauem
Pelidae stomachum cedere nescii
nec cursus duplicis per mare Vlixei
  nec saeuam Pelopis domum

conamur, tenues grandia, dum pudor
imbellisque lyrae Musa potens uetat
laudes egregii Caesaris et tuas
  culpa deterere ingeni.

quis Martem tunica tectum adamantina
digne scripserit aut puluere Troico
nigrum Merionen aut ope Palladis
  Tydiden superis parem ?

nos conuiuia, nos proelia uirginum
sectis in iuuenes unguibus acrium
cantamus, uacui siue quid urimur,[48]
  non praeter solitum leues.

Valiant and victorious over the enemy, you will be written about by Varius, bird of Homeric song, whatever exploit with ships or horse the fierce soldier has achieved under your leadership. I, Agrippa, do not attempt to utter such

48. For the punctuation of these lines, see Brink 'Horatian Notes: Despised Readings in the Manuscripts of the Odes', 2.

things, nor the weighty anger of Achilles who did not know how to yield, nor the journeys over the sea of crafty Ulysses, nor the savage house of Pelops – I humble, the themes great – while modesty and the powerful Muse of the unwarlike lyre forbid me to detract from the glory of eminent Caesar and your own through my talent's fault. Who might worthily write of Mars clad in his adamantine tunic, or of Meriones black with Trojan dust, or of Diomedes equal of the gods above through the help of Pallas? I sing of banquets, I sing of the battles of fierce girls, their nails sharpened against young men, fickle no more than usual, fancy-free or if I am in love.

Let us pick up the pose of modesty: *pudor*, *imbellis*. It is a pose, as we can firmly declare when we appreciate the ambiguity in the phrase *tenues grandia*. As Nisbet and Hubbard ad loc. say, the surface message is indeed that Horace feels too humble for such grand themes as Agrippa's achievements. But our commentators do less than justice to the allusions to Callimachus (which they acknowledge), allusions which are inevitably activated given that the basic motif itself (the 'recusatio' with its admonitory deity) ultimately derives from Callimachus. *Tenuis*, as well as meaning 'humble', recalls Callimachus' *leptos*, *leptaleos*, 'slender, finely-woven or finely-spun' (*Aet.* fr. 1.11, 24 Pf.); in one of its senses *tenuis* is a fair translation of *leptos*, *leptaleos*; and *grandia* evokes the grand-scale poetry that Callimachus abjured (fr. 398 Pf. on Antimachus' *Lyde*, *Aet.* fr. 1.10, 18, 31 Pf.). Now Callimachus was in no way humble when he espoused the *leptos* and abjured the grand: proudly and stridently, he projected this policy as the only possibility for the true artist in the modern world. Callimachus' attitudes, as well as words, echo through *tenues grandia*; the alert reader infers that Horace, masking himself in humility, actually considers himself simply too arty for the desired epic on Agrippa. For *tenuis*, note its use at *Ars Poetica* 46[49] as well as the fact that it translates *leptos*. *Tenuis* and the ambiguities it afforded were, in Horace's context, perfect. It rendered *leptos*, and artiness, it also means 'humble'. But it is particularly suited to Horace's context and Horace's purpose. It is not surprising that it was not everybody's way of rendering Callimachus' catch-word.[50]

Now let us consider the last stanza. Horace casts himself as the poet merely of love and parties. To do so he uses the motifs and language of *militia amoris*: note especially *proelia*. This, of course, allows Horace pointedly to draw attention to what he cannot do: write about real, men's battles. But *militia amoris* is the language of the Elegists. Propertius used it with some seriousness, Tibullus used it more exotically. But: *militia amoris* was typically elegiac, and Horace was no Elegist; indeed, for

49. With the excellent note of Brink at II.137.
50. See appendix 2.

identifiable reasons, he rather despised the genre and its practitioners. The elegiac flavour of Horace's 'recusatio' is reinforced: it is indeed an unconvincing way for Horace to sound sincere and serious in his supposed epic disability.[51]

And anyway Horace was *not* only a poet of love and parties – as he had already shown. He may not have been an epic poet, and *sympotica* and *erotica* are a legitimate part of the lyric poet's repertoire (and artfully Horace has disposed 1.5 as well as 1.4 before 1.6). But Horace as lyric poet could, by the laws of his genre and the force of his own talent, write in high and encomiastic vein.[52] Indeed he had already done so: witness *Ode* 1.2. To claim to be merely a poet of *sympotica* and *erotica* was therefore patently, frivolously and amusingly untrue.

Here however we have a trick which Horace was to play more than once again: when he got tired, displeased or embarrassed by a public and political role, or its prospect, the excuse lay to hand: my *lyra* is naturally *iocosa* (*Ode* 3.3.69), my lyrics merely *ludicra* (*Epist.* 1.1.10).[53] The trick could be played with subtlety (*Epist.* 1.1.10) or with cheek. Here it is only mildly exaggerative to say that he plays it with cheek.

Some readers of *Ode* 6 might notice incidentally that there is nearly as much praise for the poet Varius as there is for Agrippa (assuming that the answer to the question *quis . . . ?* in 13ff. is Varius):[54] 'Horace's friendship

51. On *militia amoris* in Propertius and Tibullus, see Lyne *The Latin Love Poets from Catullus to Horace* 71–8. But I underplay Tibullus' slightly exotic development of the motif. There is, he says, an acceptable, indeed desirable level of violence in love. Only if you overstep that do you show the difference between yourself and a real soldier (1.10.51ff.); contrast the complete distinction drawn by Propertius in 1.6. Spicy Tibullan views are rejected in Prop. 2.5.19ff., but may be influencing the problematical 3.8. On Horace and the Elegists, see Lyne *Latin Love Poets* 201ff.
52. One might make the point that Ibycus fr. 1 P, mentioned in n. 47 above, seems genuinely encomiastic. West *Reading Horace* 80 is also right to point out that Horace himself reminds us of Pindar – the great encomiast – when he mentions the canon of nine lyric poets to which he hopes to be added (1.1.35). Once the canon was established, Pindar always in fact topped the bill: Pfeiffer *History of Classical Scholarship* 205.
53. As well as the passages cited above, cf. *Ode* 2.1.37–40, discussed pp. 92–3, 2.12.13–26, *Odes* 1.37 and 38 discussed below pp. 87–8 (and see index 'trick'). *Epist.* 1.1.10 is discussed in Ch. 10. Behind two of these passages at least (2.1.37ff., 3.3.69ff.) we can detect the influence of Pindar's 'Abbruchsformeln' (e.g. *Nem.* 3.26f., Fraenkel *Horace* 239), but Pindar deployed this formula to very different effect (cf. Nisbet – Hubbard on 2.1.37).
    Syndikus *Die Lyrik* I.16 and 93–4 takes Horace differently from the way I do in these passages, seeing him as conscious of generic boundaries which he has crossed but should not cross. See too La Penna *Orazio e l'ideologia* 125f. a reaction to the last stanza of *Ode* 1.6 that interprets it much more seriously than I do, but which has interesting things to say.
54. In an early paper A.E. Housman (Diggle and Goodyear *The Classical Papers of A.E. Housman* 92) objected to the transmitted text that '"quis digne scripserit" in fact is simply the rhetorical equivalent for "nemo digne scripserit"' – and proceeded to wholesale rewriting of the Ode. Housman overstates his initial objection, but there is something in it. Horace is I think questioning the viability of the whole epic enterprise – while telling us that, if any man can do it, Varius can.

and sympathy went to . . . men, endowed with social gifts and an inclination towards the Muses.'

And that (to return to one of the poems I passed by above) is presumably why the poet Vergil is graced with the third Ode, displaced only by Maecenas and Augustus – and displacing the suffect consul Sestius. Providing Vergil with an ode at this point is an unexpected and elegant tribute to a friend and fellow artist. The poem itself is puzzling. It is not actually addressed to Vergil, but appears to be a *propempticon* for him. Vergil, apparently, is undertaking some voyage overseas, and Horace – at the beginning – utters sentiments suitable for such an occasion (1.3.1–8). But the poem then veers oddly – so it appears – into a diatribe against man's audacity, against the impious foolhardiness that led him into ventures like seafaring. Horace's interim conclusion is (25f.) *audax omnia perpeti/ gens humana ruit per uetitum nefas*, 'the human race, possessing the audacity to endure all things, rushes headlong through forbidden wickedness'; and all this (lines 9ff.) hardly seems a tactful or propitious line of thought if Vergil is literally undertaking a voyage overseas.[55] I therefore incline to the view that the Ode is a literary allegory.[56] The dangerous, foolhardy journey upon which Vergil is embarking is the epic, the genre that seemed to present to the Augustan generation such insuperable and hazardous problems, both aesthetic and political. Read thus, the poem makes good sense, it is humorous, and it is also a tribute to the literary audacity of Horace's poetical friend. And it has unity of occasion and purpose (cf. Ch. 5 and below).

I would cite a few points in support of this view.

1) Seafaring, the topic with which the poem starts (Vergil is embarking on a voyage) is a well-paralleled image of (over)ambitious literary activity, at least in Latin: cf. Vergil *Georgic* 2.41, Propertius 3.3.22–4, 3.9.3f., and Horace himself at *Ode* 4.15.3f.; see further Rothstein on Propertius 3.3.23.

55. Cf. Nisbet – Hubbard quoted above (Ch. 5 p. 61) and below. Cf. too Commager *The Odes of Horace* 118 'The *propempticon* for Vergil . . . shows Horace less in control of two positions than caught between them.' Cf. however the next note.
56. I am not of course the first to view the poem in this way, but the bibliography is not satisfactory. See for example Elder 'Horace, C., I.3' (good remarks however on pp. 149 and 152), Lockyer 'Horace's *Propempticon* and Vergil's Voyage', Pucci 'The Dilemma of Writing'. And in a curiously throwaway manner Commager *The Odes of Horace* 120 (after continuing in the strain suggested by the quotation in the previous footnote) seems suddenly to canvass the idea.

In this connection we might see the reference to the *first* 'seafarer' (*primus*, 12) as alluding to the favourite literary 'primus' theme: the theme of the *protos heuretes* of a genre.[57]

2) One example of a man who audaciously transgresses adduced later in the poem (Daedalus, 34) is for Horace a potentially literary image – like seafaring; and no doubt he had sources for a Daedalus with symbolism like this. Anyway for Horace at least the achievements of Daedalus are a fitting if ambivalent image of literary fame at *Ode* 2.20.13; and, at *Ode* 4.2.2–4, the aspirations of Daedalus are a clear allegory for foolhardy literary ambition.

3) When we come to examine Horace's reactions to man's audacity in the poem, there is perhaps as much emphasis on audacity, courage even, as there is on the concomitant impiety. Thus there is strong emphasis on the courage of the first man who tried 'seafaring' (9–33, *quem mortis timuit gradum* 17, etc.), strong emphasis on the audacity of those who followed in that and similar enterprises (21–8, *audax* 25, *audax* 27). The references to impiety we may take to be the joking imputation of a poet who thinks epic transgresses modern man's limitations; but his stress on courage and audacity – strange, if the poem is simply and literally about impious foolhardiness – smacks to me of a serious reaction to an essay in a hazardous genre.

4) Not all the examples of impious audacity *are* unequivocally of impious audacity. To many readers of the *Prometheus Vinctus* Prometheus (27) was a hero. To readers of Horace, Hercules (36) is definitely a hero (e.g. *Ode* 3.3.9f.). One of Horace's reactions to Vergil's 'voyage' therefore is to think of heroism – as well as of audacity, as well as of impiety. And to attempt epic is heroically to attempt an heroic genre.

For these reasons I am encouraged to read *Ode* 1.3 as a literary allegory. And read thus, it can as I say be read as a unity without difficulty. It has occasion and purpose (*an* occasion and purpose), with which the ingredients of the poem accord. Reflections on audacity are relevant and functional, warnings of impiety are funny, if the proposed venture is a bold literary enterprise. If the voyage in question is literal, then we have to suppose (with Nisbet – Hubbard) that Horace, beginning with sentiments appropriate to a *propempticon*, veers off onto different themes, themes which, if we try to apply them to the initial situation, must be felt to be highly inappropriate. We have to suppose in fact that 'the poem should be regarded as a conflation of two quite different types, the *propempticon* proper, and the diatribe on inventiveness'. As I have said in the previous chapter, I think that this is not Horace's way. His habit is to compose poems with unity of occasion and purpose. Equally his habit is to tease: to challenge us to find

57. Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 6.1, Hor. *Ode* 3.30.13, Prop. 3.1.3 with Fedeli ad loc., citing many examples, Greek and Latin, and modern bibliography.

that unity, find the occasion. In *Ode* 1.3, once we have grasped that it is allegorical, we have found unity and occasion.

Ode 1.24 is, incidentally, also composed for Vergil, and actually addressed to him. In it he is consoled for the death of Quintilius – and honoured again, if lines 13ff. are an allusion to the Orpheus section of *Georgics* 4.[58]

So, with calculation Horace promotes Vergil above Sestius, perhaps not to Sestius' unalloyed delight. If that is so, consider the feelings of Agrippa (*Ode* 1.6) demoted to a position below that of the frivolities of Pyrrha, *Ode* 1.5.[59] Of course (Horace could say) the principle of 'variatio' imposed the separation of the public figures Sestius and Agrippa. But no such principle constrains Horace in the six Roman Odes (*Odes* 3.1–6). And if I had been Agrippa I might have been piqued to be thus postponed – and then so teasingly treated. And consider simply the company my Ode was asked to keep: Pyrrha. Sestius who precedes her may, on my guess at his tastes, have found this position rather congenial, rather more congenial than being displaced by Vergil. One is less disposed to believe that Agrippa was happy lying beneath her. Or perhaps Agrippa had more sense of fun than one is inclined to impute to him. Or perhaps, as I have suggested and am most inclined to believe, he little cared or noticed, and the teasingly disrespectful treatment that Horace metes out to him was more designed to amuse others, than to be detected by Augustus' general.

Odes 1.1, 2, 4, 6: all to great public men, pointedly or teasingly interrupted by *Odes* 1.3 and 5. Then the last of the opening clutch of Odes to great men: 1.7 to Munatius Plancus. It is not too surprising that he follows up in the rear. He had been active, successful, and ruthless in the early triumviral period – ruthless enough to secure the proscription of his own brother in 43 B.C.[60] *Nouus homo* consul in 42 B.C., he had then thrown in

58. Cf. Nisbet – Hubbard on 1.24.13. There is a clearer allusion to Vergil's Orpheus at *Ode* 2.13.33ff.: see Nisbet – Hubbard on 2.13.33.

59. On the placing of 1.5 see too above p. 78.

60. It was while he was celebrating a triumph in Dec. 43 B.C., *ex Gallis* according to *CIL* X 6087 (*ex Raetis* according to *ILS* 886), that the soldiers coined their joking verse *de germanis, non de Gallis duo triumphant consules* referring to the proscription of Plancus' and Lepidus' own brothers: Velleius 2.67.3–4. It will have been in the wake of this triumph – and not in the Augustan period – that Plancus indulged in the self-advertisement of restoring the Temple of Saturn: cf. Eck in Millar and Segal *Caesar Augustus* 140: Suet. *Aug.* 29 is vague about dating and might mislead. (Two versions of the proscription of Lepidus' brother existed, one more generous to Lepidus and probably untrue: see Plut. *Ant.* 19.2–3: 'Lepidus also was permitted to put to death Paullus his brother; although some say that Lepidus gave up Paullus to Antony and Caesar, who demanded his death.' Plutarch had given the 'some say' version without qualification at *Cic.* 46.5; Pelling on *Ant.* argues that in the meantime Plutarch had read the other version in Pollio and decided it was more plausible. For the more generous version, cf. too Dio 47.6.3 and 8.1 who tells us that Paullus managed to escape.)

his lot with Antonius whom he served as 'marshal and courtier'.[61] For this miscalculation he made amends to Octavian by deserting to him in 32 B.C.,[62] by giving him crucial information about Antonius' will,[63] and, in 27 B.C., by proposing the inspirational name Augustus, which was evocative of Romulus, without actually being Romulus.[64] So, deserving of some honour, he gets it: *Ode* 7, written, I take it, comfortably post-Actium, in the first Augustan period. That of course was certainly when it was designed to be read.[65]

The Ode runs as follows:

laudabunt alii claram Rhodon aut Mytilenen
  aut Epheson bimarisue Corinthi
moenia uel Baccho Thebas uel Apolline Delphos
  insignis aut Thessala Tempe:
sunt quibus unum opus est intactae Palladis urbem
  carmine perpetuo celebrare et
undique decerptam fronti praeponere oliuam:
  plurimus in Iunonis honorem
aptum dicet equis Argos ditisque Mycenas:
  me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon
nec tam Larisae percussit campus opimae,
  quam domus Albuneae resonantis
et praeceps Anio ac Tiburni lucus et uda
  mobilibus pomaria riuis.

61. Nisbet – Hubbard I.91. For further information on the life of Munatius Plancus see *RE* 16.1.545–51, Syme *Augustan Aristocracy*, index s.v. Munatius Plancus, L. *cos.* 42. See Woodman on Velleius 2.95.3 for Velleius' 'indirect' method of characterizing him, and for Velleius' references to him.
62. Dio 50.3.1; Velleius 2.83.1–2, most uncomplimentarily.
63. Plut. *Ant.* 58.2.
64. Suet. *Aug.* 7. Cf. too Dio 53.16.7. The emperor, founder of the New Rome, originally wanted the appellation *Romulus* (cf. the thinking of Cicero at *Cat.* 3.2), but it was a name with unhappy associations (freshened by Horace himself in *Epod.* 7), and he was dissuaded from adopting it: Suet. loc. cit. But he never lost a penchant for being associated with Romulus the original founder, as contemporary texts and monuments signify: cf. Syme *The Roman Revolution* 305f., 313f., Hannestad *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* 84–7, Zanker *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* 103 = *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* 98, and note the juxtaposition of Romulus and Augustus in Verg. *Aen.* 6.777–805 and the way Ovid in *Fast.* 'censors' the fratricide of Remus, *Fast.* 3.69–70, 4.807–56, 5.451f. The name 'Augustus' however was an inspirational choice in that, for one thing, it alluded to Romulus and the foundation of the city, without specifically mentioning the ambiguous founder himself: cf. Ennius 154f. Sk. *septingenti sunt . . . anni/augusto augurio postquam incluta condita Roma est*; cf. e.g. La Penna *Orazio e l'ideologia* 92. Suet. loc. cit. seems to have appreciated the allusive point. Plancus was clever.
65. On the date of the Ode, note the implications of Syme *Roman Revolution* 511, *Augustan Aristocracy* 385 as well as the discussion (in particular n. 67) below.

albus ut obscuro deterget nubila caelo
  saepe Notus neque parturit imbris
perpetuo, sic tu sapiens finire memento
  tristitiam uitaeque labores
molli, Plance, mero, seu te fulgentia signis
  castra tenent seu densa tenebit
Tiburis umbra tui. Teucer Salamina patremque
  cum fugeret, tamen uda Lyaeo
tempora populea fertur uinxisse corona,
  sic tristis adfatus amicos:
'quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente,
  ibimus, o socii comitesque.
nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice Teucro.
  certus enim promisit Apollo
ambiguam tellure noua Salamina futuram.
  o fortes peioraque passi
mecum saepe uiri, nunc uino pellite curas;
  cras ingens iterabimus aequor.'

Others will praise famous Rhodes or Mitylene or Ephesus or the walls of two-sea Corinth or Thebes notable for Bacchus or Delphi notable for Apollo or Thessalian Tempe. There are some whose one task is to celebrate in continuous song the city of virgin Pallas and to place upon their brow olive gathered from every quarter: many a one in honour of Juno will talk of Argos suited to horses and of wealthy Mycenae. As for me, neither enduring Lacedaemon nor the plain of rich Larisa has so struck me as has the abode of echoing Albunea and headlong Anio and Tiburnus' grove and the orchards watered by swift-moving streams [i.e. Tibur]. Just as Notus often brightly clears clouds from a dark sky and does not breed continuous showers, so do you, Plancus, wisely remember to end gloom and life's toils with gentle wine, whether the camp shining with standards holds you or whether the dense shade of your own Tibur shall hold you. Teucer, when he fled Salamis and his father, is yet said to have bound poplar round his temples wet with wine, addressing thus his sad friends: 'Whithersoever Fortune, better than my father, shall bear us, we shall go, o friends and companions. In no wise despair under Teucer's lead and Teucer's auspices. For unswerving Apollo promised us there would be an equivocal Salamis in a new land. O heroes who are brave and have suffered worse things with me, now banish cares with wine; tomorrow we shall renew our course over the vast main.'

The content is significant, and loaded. The first fourteen lines form an elaborate priamel[66] whose end result is to bestow praise on Tibur, Plancus' home and place of repose. The *seu* clause of 19f. politely allows for the

66. See n. 14 above.

possibility of military service, but the overwhelming weight of the priamel (and the poem) surely points in one direction only. These are days of peace now, at least for Plancus; and for Plancus the future means basically Tibur, the retiring shade, and the comforts of sympotic clichés. Most likely, given the Nisbet – Hubbard law,[67] this is largely what Plancus would want, maybe some safe advisory employment – the chance to come up with bright ideas like the name 'Augustus' – but basically: Tibur, repose, and comfortable enjoyment of the day. After all, he had come well out of the wars – against some odds – and was presumably prudent enough to enjoy the peace which some would say he did not deserve.[68] The concluding paraenesis does however tactfully promise that, as it were, tomorrow is another day.[69] All in all this is a poem designed for a great man whose days of great activity are over, but planned – in most respects – to conform and please. Plancus might well like reassurance in his decision to enjoy the peace – and he will appreciate praise of his delightful resting place. He needs no reminders of his military past, mixed and distasteful as much of it had been. He might have liked some reference to his diplomatic *coup* (the name 'Augustus'), but here

67. Nisbet – Hubbard II.3–4 'Sometimes the great man is encouraged to adopt a position that he holds already, or thinks he holds . . .'. Nisbet – Hubbard I.91 however interpret the weighting of the present Ode (1.7) very differently from me: 'our poem implies that Plancus was still on service (20 *castra*)', and this leads them to excavate strange theories on the Ode's date of composition (40–35 B.C.? the time of the Actium campaign?). But they conclude on p. 91: 'Perhaps the ode was written soon after his return, and tactfully puts in the future what has already happened.' This interpretation of the future tense is surely right, the Ode was written after Plancus' return and rehabilitation, and perhaps not so soon after that return. In their note on line 19, however, Nisbet – Hubbard abandon this idea, lean on the present tense *castra tenent* and comment '"whether the camp holds you as now . . ." . . . ; the disjunction implies that Plancus is now on a campaign': a literal-minded reaction to the present tense, ignoring Horatian diplomacy, ignoring the structure and emphasis of the whole Ode. It seems to me virtually certain that composition belongs comfortably to the post-Actium, 'First Augustan' period when Plancus' role is at most diplomatic and advisory, patently so, and the Ode is designed to fit with this role and to please Plancus in it; and it is absolutely certain, of course, that Horace published it in the knowledge that it would be read at this stage of Plancus' career. (Cf. too Syme *Roman Revolution* 511; I take 'contemplates the possibility' to be ironical.) When I say the Ode is designed to 'please' Plancus, I ought to add that I shall eventually produce one slight reservation.
68. See the hostility in the references cited above nn. 61, 62 from Velleius. It is worth noting that Velleius' acid comment that 'treachery was a disease with him' is related to, and anticipated by, Cicero's remark to him (*Fam.* 10.3.3) that 'for a while men thought you were too much of a time-server'. Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 385 pointedly remarks too that, even had Plancus wanted further military employment in the Augustan period, he was hardly likely to get it. Nor was that something beyond Plancus' ability to guess.
69. And there was another day, of a sort. In 22 B.C., after the publication of the *Odes*, Plancus held the censorship, ineffectually according to Velleius 2.95.3. His colleague in the censorship was L. Aemilius Lepidus Paullus (*RE* 1.565–6), nephew of the triumvir Lepidus. One wonders if the two censors ever discussed the proscriptions of 43, when the two consuls designate, Lepidus and Plancus himself, had caused the proscription of their own brothers, causing the soldiers' cynical verse referred to in n. 60 above. Lepidus' proscribed brother was Paullus' father. (But as I say in n. 60 there is some uncertainty in our sources about Lepidus and the proscription of his brother.)

Horace does not oblige. The Ode is tactful, almost entirely,[70] where it might have been barbed, bland where it might have been laudatory. The Nisbet – Hubbard law holds (Horace likes to 'advise' important people to do what they are doing already . . .). But it is not the end of the story, even in this Ode.

Plancus concludes the opening clutch of grandees in Book 1, and from him we can conveniently cut to one of the opening *laudandi* of Book 2: to Sallustius Crispus, addressee of *Ode* 2.2 (of the difficult consular Asinius Pollio to whom *Ode* 2.1 is devoted I shall say something in a moment). Sallustius Crispus, great-nephew and adopted son of the historian, was another late convert to the cause of Augustus. He like Maecenas became one of the emperor's most trusted equestrian ministers.[71] If we are to compare the dispositional honour Horace accords to Plancus on the one hand, and to Sallustius on the other, Plancus wins. Plancus may be last in the opening clutch of Book 1, while Sallustius Crispus has the second Ode of Book 2, but the middle book as a whole has less prominence than the first – less prominence too than the last: Horace has much muted musing in his intermezzo, grand themes in the third and last movement. And a glance at the company both men keep, that is to say, are deemed to deserve, shows Plancus' preferral. The consular Plancus, visionary proposer of the new *cognomen*, has for company Maecenas, Augustus, Sestius, Agrippa: men likewise consular or superbly illustrious. Plancus will be pricked by a Horatian barb – and is teased by Horatian displacements (Vergil, Pyrrha) – but he is placed in high society. Now look at Sallustius' company: by-passing Asinius Pollio, we find Sallustius in Sallustian company: C.

For another comment on the myth in the paraenesis, see below p. 172.
70. The reader will detect that I am holding something back. See below p. 172.
71. For Sallustius' late conversion, see Sen. *Clem.* 1.10.1: (Seneca to Nero) *ignouit abauus tuus uictis. nam si non ignouisset, quibus imperasset? Sallustium et Cocceios et Dellios et totam cohortem primae admissionis* (i.e. all his most influential advisors, an overstatement) *ex aduersariorum castris conscripsit.* For the existence and importance of Augustus' equestrian *amici*, see the appendix in Ch. 7 on Maecenas; in that same appendix Tac. *Ann* 3.30 is quoted and translated, which gives an incisive view of Sallustius' character and power in Augustus' reign, and a comparison of him and his power with Maecenas. See too Plin. *Nat.* 34.3 for Sallustius' service to Augustus. And see *RE* Zeite Reihe I.1955f. for Sallustius' later career, his service to Tiberius. For his complicity in the death of Agrippa Postumus, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.6 as well as 3.30. Syme *Roman Papers* 1089 discusses the possibility of a relationship of kinship between Sallustius and C. Proculeius – which would be relevant to *Ode* 2.2.

Proculeius (in Sallustius' own Ode) and Q. Dellius in *Ode* 2.3. These men are likewise equestrian advisers to Augustus.[72] Augustus attached huge importance to these non-senatorial ministers, and therefore they are honoured. But equestrian, without public *honores*, and not entirely special cases like Maecenas – and not personal favourites with Horace like Vergil, like Pyrrha[73] – Horace thinks they should be honoured in their own class and company, and in Book 2.

Sallustius Crispus, non-senatorial minister of Caesar, gets his meed of honour. In fact the main thrust of Horace's poem does not concern his political position (that would be indiscreet). It honours him on other grounds, and unobtrusively: the grounds required unobtrusiveness. Nisbet and Hubbard convincingly read *Ode* 2.2 as a discreet 'thank you' (stanza 1 and stanzas 3–6) to a generous patron of literature; its discretion is, as Nisbet and Hubbard say, interesting to compare with the less inhibited gratitude expressed to Sallustius by the Greek poet Crinagoras.[74] Discretion and unobtrusiveness in the 'thank you' were essential. If Horace did receive bounty from Sallustius, he must on the one hand acknowledge it; on the other hand he must not acknowledge it in such a way as to appear servile, nor to appear to detract from or even to make comparisons with the patronage of his really important patron, Maecenas. 'Horace carries his delicacy so far that he presents the encomium of a rich benefactor as a denunciation of materialism' (Nisbet – Hubbard II.34). That deals with the problem of servility. It more or less deals with the other problem too. But to enforce the point – Maecenas has no comparison – the Ode is positioned far from any Ode to Maecenas.

Ode 2.2 also honours C. Proculeius (stanza 2), *eques* and '*amicus Augusti*' and, possibly, relative of Sallustius.[75] Since he too was a patron of literature,[76] the coded acknowledgement of generosity in stanzas 3–6 presumably includes him. But there is something more interesting. Horace *explicitly* praises him for his 'fatherly spirit' towards his brothers (5–8):

> uiuet extento Proculeius aeuo,
> notus in fratres animi paterni;

72. On Q. Dellius, also a late convert, see Sen. *Clem.* 1.10.1 quoted above n. 71. Friend of Augustus he became, but he also obtained the damning label from Messalla of 'switch-back rider of the civil wars', *desultor ciuilium bellorum* (Sen. *Suas.* 1.7): no worse, however, than Velleius' judgement of Munatius Plancus, *morbo proditor*, 2.83.1 (cf. above n. 68). On C. Proculeius see Syme e.g. *Roman Papers* 1089, Nisbet – Hubbard II.40, Dio 54.3.5, etc.; Augustus even contemplated marrying Julia to Proculeius, if Tacitus is to be believed: Tac. *Ann.* 4.40, Nicolet in Millar and Segal *Caesar Augustus* 106.
73. Pyrrha is a personal favourite of Horace only in the literary sense. Of course.
74. *Anth. Pl.* 40 = Crinagoras XXXVI Gow and Page.
75. See n. 71 above. The phrase *amicus Augusti* is actually cited from Porphyrio, quoted in full below, n. 77.
76. Juvenal 7.94f. *quis tibi Maecenas, quis nunc erit aut Proculeius . . . ?*

> illum aget penna metuente solui
> Fama superstes.
>
> Proculeius will live through distant ages, known for his fatherly spirit towards his brothers; Fame that survives will bear him on wing that fears to be slackened.

There are two facts to consider here. Porphyrio explains the reference by telling us that Proculeius shared his possessions equally with his brothers Scipio and Murena when they lost theirs in civil war;[77] and this is presumably the point that Horace is primarily or superficially getting at. But Dio 54.3.5 tells us something else. Proculeius' brother Murena is the conspirator Murena,[78] brother-in-law of Maecenas, and Dio records that Proculeius in some way interceded for him in the trial of 23 B.C.: 'Neither Proculeius, his brother, nor Maecenas, his sister's husband, could be of any help to Murena.' The clear implication is that both Proculeius and Maecenas did make some attempt to intercede; and for Maecenas we have the evidence of Suetonius that he not only tried but suffered for so trying.[79] So what of Proculeius and his 'fatherly spirit' in this light? Nisbet and Hubbard (II.40) remark: 'the reference to his *fratres* would naturally have been deleted if the book had been published after the conspiracy'. But if Syme is right about the dating of the conspiracy, which I am sure he is,[80] then *Odes* 1–3, published in the second half of 23 B.C., will have been published after the revolutionary revelations – and Horace will not have deleted, he may even have included, a eulogy of Proculeius which besides recalling past generosities would now also bring to mind Proculeius' loyalty to Murena at the moment of his brother's downfall: and it is a eulogy written in the sort of high language (*illum aget penna metuente solui/Fama superstes*, 7–8) which the reader will come to associate with *Virtus* (3.2.24) and Horace's own fame (2.20). The Ode would therefore be making its own independent political statement. It is far from unlikely. Touches of political independence long antedate the more extended policy of retrospective 'sapping'[81] that we find in Book 4. A whole chapter is shortly to be devoted to them.

If we consider another public Ode about a great man, *Ode* 1.37,[82] we may see some slight 'sapping' by positioning – and tactics to parallel tactics

77. Porphyrio ad loc.: *Proculeius eques Romanus, amicus Augusti, carissimae pietatis erga fratres suos Scipionem et Murenam fuit, adeo ut bona sua cum his aequis partibus diuiserit quia illi bello ciuili erant spoliati.*
78. For this conspiracy see appendix to Ch. 7 and Ch. 10 p. 190.
79. See below appendix to Ch. 7, p. 138.
80. See below Ch. 7, appendix, p. 138, Ch. 10 p. 190.
81. For this metaphor, see Ch. 12 p. 207 n. 1.
82. Cf. too above pp. 42–3.

already observed. Book 4 suggests (above p. 69) that the concluding position in a book is an important one for an Ode (4.15 is the praise of Augustus' final, conclusive peace); likewise 2.20, and 3.30 (though Horace does not give these to public men: he gives them to himself).[83] *Ode* 1.37 is about Octavian's victory at Actium and the subsequent suicide of Cleopatra: a poem thus about a great man and great events. But it is not allowed to conclude the book. It is denied that important position, and placed as the penultimate poem. The 'triviality' of *Persicos odi* is given the position of ultimacy. One may compare this in the first place with the denial of the last poem in Book 3 to Maecenas, and his relegation to penultimacy. As with Maecenas, so with Actium and Cleopatra, Horace seems to withhold dispositional importance where such importance is due – an assertion of independence, or an assertion of some sort. To get a slightly closer idea of what sort of 'assertion' it is here ('assertion' is perhaps too strong a word), we must reconsider the 'trivial' *Persicos odi*. It rather follows that it cannot be trivial, since it occupies the last position in the book. On the face of it, it is of course merely a sympotic poem, a poem of simple pleasure, wine and, discreetly, love.[84] But Horace leaves us with this picture of himself – in this book – for this is the last poem. Horace leaves us therefore with the impression that he is ultimately the sympotic-erotic poet. We may now recall the trick Horace likes to play, which I referred to above in my discussion of Agrippa's Ode (1.6). If he gets tired, displeased or embarrassed by a public or political role, an excuse for backing out of it lies to hand: my *lyra* is naturally *iocosa* (*Ode* 3.3.69), my lyrics merely *ludicra* (*Epist.* 1.1.10). Something like this is happening here. 'I can sing of public events,' says Horace, '*nunc est bibendum*', but my more natural *métier*, the impression I would like to leave you with, is of sympotic poet, *sub arta/uite bibentem*'. A neat little piece of ring-composition wraps up the point.[85]

83. *Ode* 2.20 includes a variation on the genre of the 'poet's own epitaph'; 3.30 works with the poetic *sphragis*. Both – importantly positioned – poems honour Horace.
84. There is a hint or more than a hint of love in most of Horace's *sympotica*. Here it consists in Horace's inviting, by implication, the slave boy to share the party, and in deciding that both of them should be garlanded with myrtle. Myrtle was sacred to Venus: cf. Plaut. *Vid.* 17, Verg. *Ecl.* 7.62, Ov. *Fast.* 4.15 with Bömer's important note, *Fast.* 4.139–44, Catull. 61.22 with Syndikus *Catull, Eine Interpretation* II.19. The erotic implication of the poem is appreciated by West 'Persian luxuries and plain myrtle'. By contrast, Kiessling and Heinze in the 8th edn of *Die Oden und Epoden*, 1955 say: 'eine erotische Bedeutung hat der Myrtenkranz hier so wenig wie I 4, 9 oder II 7, 25'. 'So viel' would be more to the point.
85. The ring-composition and its significance was pointed out to me by Camilla Bingham. Contrast Commager *The Odes of Horace* 313–14 (n. 7): 'C. 1.38 functions in a similar way [to 2.20], linking the first and second books. Horace's banishment of oriental luxury (C. 1.38.1) may signal his turning to the Roman themes of C. 2.1.' Extraordinary.

The opening poem of a book is in an obviously honorific position. The opening poem of Book 2 honours the consular C. Asinius Pollio. To open Book 2 is a comparatively muted honour (see above p. 85), but it is an honour nonetheless, and it is accorded to this fascinating figure, Pollio. A few salient facts about him:[86] he was consul in 40 B.C., and Antonian in sympathy. He remained aloof from the conflict of Actium,[87] and during the Augustan regime was independent-minded – and independent of that regime. Let us first absorb Horace's dispositional policy at its simplest level. Pride of place in Book 2 is given to the consular. Horace respects rank. It can be looked at another way. Pollio, no favourite of Augustus, displaces treasured advisers of Augustus (the equestrians Sallustius, Proculeius), and that not inevitable *dispositio* should not be wholly ignored.

Besides soldier and politician, Pollio was also a great literary figure: among other things he was himself both tragedian and historian. It is Pollio's *Histories*, just published presumably, or imminent,[88] to which Horace pays particular attention in this Ode: they treated of the civil wars of 60–42 and perhaps later. Horace gives a vivid impression of them; this imposes – or rather, Horace chooses to allow it to impose – certain subject matter and mood upon him, and in consequence the Ode and its disposition have an interesting and subtle impact on the collection as a whole, in particular on Book 1. In fact Horace is again toying with the 'sapping' policy fully deployed in Book 4. In full the Ode runs as follows:

motum ex Metello consule ciuicum
bellique causas et uitia et modos
ludumque Fortunae grauisque
principum amicitias et arma

nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus,
periculosae plenum opus aleae,
tractas, et incedis per ignis
suppositos cineri doloso.

paulum seuerae Musa tragoediae
desit theatris: mox ubi publicas

86. Nisbet – Hubbard's introduction to *Ode* 2.1 gives an excellent summary biography.
87. Velleius 2.86.3: Octavian asks Pollio to go with him to the war at Actium; his reply strikes me as combining honour and arrogance: *mea, inquit, in Antonium maiora merita sunt, illius in me beneficia notiora; itaque discrimini uestro me subtraham et ero praeda uictoris*, 'my services to Antonius are too great, his kindnesses to me too well known; and so I shall withdraw myself from your dispute, and shall be the prize [booty, *praeda*] of the victor'. The arrogance I detect rests in the implications of the word *praeda*, but I may be being unfair, or misinterpreting.
88. On the status of its publication as Horace writes see Nisbet – Hubbard II.9 and 10.

res ordinaris, grande munus
Cecropio repetes cothurno,

insigne maestis praesidium reis
et consulenti, Pollio, curiae,
cui laurus aeternos honores
Delmatico peperit triumpho.

iam nunc minaci murmure cornuum
perstringis auris, iam litui strepunt,
iam fulgor armorum fugaces
terret equos equitumque uultus.

audire magnos iam uideor duces
non indecoro puluere sordidos,
et cuncta terrarum subacta
praeter atrocem animum Catonis.

Iuno et deorum quisquis amicior
Afris inulta cesserat impotens
tellure uictorum nepotes
rettulit inferias Iugurthae.

quis non Latino sanguine pinguior
campus sepulcris impia proelia
testatur auditumque Medis
Hesperiae sonitum ruinae?

qui gurges aut quae flumina lugubris
ignara belli? quod mare Dauniae
non decolorauere caedes?
quae caret ora cruore nostro?

sed ne relictis, Musa procax, iocis
Ceae retractes munera neniae,
mecum Dionaeo sub antro
quaere modos leuiore plectro.

The civil strife that began with Metellus' consulship (60 B.C.) and the causes of war and the vices and its conduct and Fortune's game and the grievous friendships[89] of leading statesmen and weapons anointed with blood not yet expiated, a task full of dangerous hazard, this is your subject, and you walk over fire hidden beneath treacherous ash. For a brief time let your Muse of stern tragedy be lacking to the theatres; soon, when you have put in order events of state, you will seek again your great task in the Attic buskin, famed bulwark to sad defendants and, Pollio, to the consulting Senate, you for

89. On 'friendships' here see below.

whom the laurel brought forth eternal honour in your Dalmatian triumph. Now, even now, you strike our ears with the threatening blare of horns, now the trumpets sound, now the gleam of weapons terrifies fleeing horses and the countenances of the horsemen. Now I seem to hear the great generals, begrimed with not unseemly dust, and the whole world subdued besides the fierce mind of Cato. Juno and whoever of the gods, more friendly to the Africans, had withdrawn powerless from the land unavenged, have brought the grandsons of the victors as death-offerings to Jugurtha. What plain richer with Latin blood does not bear witness by its tombs to impious battles and to the sound of Hesperia's (Italy's) ruin heard by the Medes? What pool or rivers are without knowledge of tragic war? What sea has Daunian[90] slaughter not discoloured? What shore lacks our blood? But, my wanton Muse, do not abandon your games, do not go over again these Simonidean dirges. In Venus' grotto seek with me measures with lighter lyre.[91]

First we should notice that, although Horace is particularly concerned with Pollio's history, he manages to acknowledge (a) the great man's past military triumph, in 39 B.C. (lines 15–16), (b) his function as a great patron in the courts (line 13), and that too with a word which brings to mind the patronage of Maecenas[92] in the opening poem of Book 1; and he acknowledges (c) Pollio's political eminence in the senate, his status in fact as a *princeps* (line 14)[93] – that too in spite of Pollio's determined independence from the Augustan regime. The poem is interesting for these complimentary details alone.

But to pick up the point made above: the primary or apparently primary function of the Ode is to evoke and therefore praise Pollio's History of the Civil Wars. And as Nisbet and Hubbard have shown,[94] Horace does this by echoing Pollio's own tone, substance and even language, particularly that of his preface. But here I would stress two points. It is some time before we learn that Horace is evoking Pollio's, rather than his own, description of the civil war period, at once perceptively pragmatic (3f.) and darkly, mysteriously tragic (5 etc.) in tone: not until lines 7ff. and 14 in fact. And in any

90. On this epithet see below p. 94.
91. Literally (see Nisbet/Hubbard ad loc.): '. . . do not go over again the rites of Simonidean funeral-dirge [i.e. the sort of thing composing the previous two stanzas] . . . with lighter plectrum'.
92. *Praesidium*: *Ode* 1.1.2, on which see above p. 70. Horace uses this prosaic (Axelson *Unpoetische Wörter* 98) and therefore striking word at 1.1.2, 2.1.13, and only otherwise at 1.15.13 and 3.29.62 in the *Odes*. Of course Horace is referring to different aspects of patronage in both cases, but protecting a client poet and protecting a defendant are both instances of *patrocinium* (Gelzer *The Roman Nobility* 62ff.), as indeed the shared use of the word *praesidium* underlines.
93. A consular whom the senate deferred to merits the title *princeps*: see Gelzer *The Roman Nobility* 44–9.
94. Nisbet – Hubbard II.8–9.

case – my second point – this 'laudation of Pollio as a historian',[95] the evocation of his History's tone and content, puts Horace into a position where he must recall and re-create *pre*-Augustan gloom and tragedy. More particularly, it puts him into a position where he must recall the tragic cycle that *Ode* 1.2 said was now all over. I say 'must': but clearly this is Horatian design. He has put himself into this position. And it has a remarkable effect.

But first some examples and detail. In *Ode* 1.2.23 and 47 *uitium* is symptomatic of the state of disgrace whence we are now being saved: but at 2.1.2 *uitia* are prominent and unalloyed. At 1.2.50 Mercury is incarnate as *princeps* and here to save us: but 2.1.3–4 *grauisque principum amicitias* brings back to mind the bad old days of the alliances (*amicitiae*)[96] of the unscrupulous, revolutionary *principes*, in particular the deal to which we refer as the 'first triumvirate' (60 B.C.). At 1.2.29ff. Horace asks rhetorically *cui dabit partis scelus expiandi/Iuppiter?*, 'to whom will Jupiter give the role of expiating the inherited wickedness?' (to which he himself had referred back in *Epode* 7), and the answer comes: Augustus. With this contrast 2.1.4f. *arma/nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus*: we are back in the days of blood unexpiated, and no end in sight. Note then 1.2.21ff.: report of citizens using weapons on each other which had better been used on Parthians (*Persae*) is already, patently, in that poem, the receding past – as is the notion of an empire collapsing (*ruentis*, 1.2.25). But at 2.1.29ff. 'impious battles', that is say, battles between Roman and Roman are present and everywhere, and the sound of Italy in collapse (*ruinae*,[97] 2.1.32) reaches the ears of Parthia (*Medis*, 31).

Now, unless you read *Ode* 2.1 constantly reminding yourself that it is history, that it is evoking a 'History', it can seem as if all that *Ode* 1.2 refers to (salvation, and so on) has never happened. And Horace himself does not emphatically so remind us. On the contrary. References to the historian's activity – which suggest historical perspective, pastness – are sparse and discreet (*tractas* 7, *mox ubi publicas/res ordinaris* 10f, *perstringis* 18, and, more equivocally, *audire . . . uideor* 21). And, especially from line 25 on, Horace appears so bound up by the presence of calamity that when he plays the trick that he familiarly plays to extricate himself from too public or political a role ('my *lyra* is naturally *iocosa*'[98]), it is very much as if it is,

95. Nisbet – Hubbard II.10.
96. Horace uses *amicitia* here in its cynical, political sense. Essentially the term of aristocratic social pacts and obligations, it was extended to the pacts of aristocrats in politics; and as these became more cynical so did the use of the word: cf. Lyne *Latin Love Poets* 25–6 (and index s.v), Syme *Roman Revolution* 12 (and index s.v.), Hellegouarc'h *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la république* 41–62 (and index s.v.).
97. *ruo* and *ruina* are of course cognate.
98. *Ode* 3.3.69, *Epist.* 1.1.10; see above p. 78. Here, in *Ode* 2.1 the last stanza: *sed ne relictis, Musa procax, iocis. . . .* See below.

precisely, from the horrors of a calamitous political present that he wishes to withdraw. We note in particular the rhetorical questions and exclamations of stanzas 29ff. and 33ff. and their present and perfect tenses. 'What plain richer with Latin blood does not bear witness by its tombs to impious battles? . . . What rivers are without knowledge of tragic war? What sea has Daunian[99] slaughter not discoloured? What shore lacks our blood?' And then there follows the escape clause: 'But, my wanton Muse, do not abandon your games, do not go over again these Simonidean dirges. In Venus' grotto seek with me measures with lighter lyre.' It is indeed as if Horace is seeking to escape from a *present* of impiety – until we remember that he is reacting to Pollio and history, and that these questions are conditioned by, and focalized through, Pollio. Until then it is impossible not to feel that Horace is seeking to escape from crime still vivid – and from unexpiated blood, *nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus*.

We have here a carefully designed and remarkable effect, something that we can class as an insidious ambiguity. We can interpret the Ode, in addition to its function as a laudation of Pollio, in two ways. We can say that Horace beguiles us into feeling that the horror and crime of civil war are still with us, only to reinforce our relief when we remember that this is all actually history and the truth is *Ode* 1.2. Or we can brood upon, for example, the ambiguity that focalization involves. Who is to say for sure that the rhetorical questions of 29ff. and 33ff. reflect a past and Pollionian point of view and only that view? Can we wholly divorce them from the present and Horace?[100] How? Focalized questions like these, without clear attribution of author, are necessarily ambiguous. And we can too – we must – digest the carefully contrived restatement of tragic guilt: *Ode* 2.1 tells us that weapons have been anointed with blood unexpiated. It does not tell us of atonement and salvation.[101] When we brood along these quite legitimate lines, it is possible to feel not relief, but the contrary: it is possible to feel the confidence that *Ode* 1.2 inspired being 'sapped'. Pushing this line of interpretation, one can even argue that *Ode* 2.1 denies *Ode* 1.2.[102]

99. On this epithet see below p. 94.
100. Nisbet – Hubbard can: see n. 105 below.
101. Contrast the restatement of guilt at 1.35.33ff. *eheu, cicatricum et sceleris pudet fratumque . . .* This is *within* the prayer to *Fortuna*, 29ff. *serues iturum Caesarem in ultimos/orbis Britannos et iuuenum recens/examen Eois timendum/partibus . . .* and 38ff. *o utinam noua incude diffingas retusum in/ Massagetas Arabasque ferrum!*. We may feel confident that *Fortuna* will 'save' Caesar who is 'about to go' against Britons, that she will 'save' the Roman legions who are 'objects of fear' to Easterners, and that therefore she will 'reforge' the impious sword – and the crime will be atoned for.
102. Trying, it seems to me, to avoid the disturbing impact of the poem, Nisbet – Hubbard II.10 commend a date of composition *circa* 34 B.C. Their reason? Among others: 'when Horace says that the ashes are still smouldering, that might be unnecessarily tactless after the Augustan settlement'. But all such

Finally we may note two points in the rhetorical questions of 33ff. First, *Dauniae* (vel sim.) is Horace's favoured way of referring to his home region of Apulia. The slaughter he is thinking of in lines 34f. is very much that of his own people; the epithet in fact implies deep Horatian involvement in the rhetorical question.[103] Secondly, an allusion to the assassination of Pompey, cut down on the coast of Egypt, is hard not to see in *quae caret ora cruore nostro?* (36),[104] especially after *magnos . . . duces* (21), on which see Nisbet and Hubbard. And, given the allusion, it is then hard to exclude sympathetic Horatian identification with the assassinated Pompey when he uses the epithet *nostro*. Of course, focalization offers an escape route. The questions are conditioned by, and focalized through, Pollio.[105] But if we allow ourselves to say that they *only* reflect the point of view of Pollio, we tame the text unnaturally, and abnegate the productive ambiguity that focalization involves. In fact it is impossible to exclude Horatian involvement from *nostro* and therefore, if the allusion strikes one, it is impossible to exclude Horatian sympathy with the assassinated Pompey. Just as it is impossible to exclude Horatian involvement from the rhetorical questions as a whole.

About Odes to Maecenas I have more to say in the next chapter. On Horace's Ode to the great Messalla, at whose expense Horace feels confident enough to allow himself a little fun, see Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 385,[106] also Chapter 7 pp. 107–8. For other Odes which may be to 'senators

conjectures about date of composition are really beside the point; even if a date of composition in the thirties could be proved, it would not save our poet from 'tactlessness'. The important and only indisputable fact is that the poem was issued in 23 B.C., in the high Augustan period – with no footnote to indicate that its composition and mood are a decade old – and it was issued as part of the collection of Odes Books 1–3, necessarily having an impact on that collection. Nisbet – Hubbard posit an early date to defuse another poem: see I.180f. on *Ode* 1.14.

103. Cf. *Odes* 1.22.14, 4.14.26, and especially 3.30.11, 4.6.27. See Nisbet – Hubbard on 1.22.14. And Nisbet – Hubbard's comment on 2.1.34 is very much to my point: '"Apulian" is not simply a synecdoche for "Italian"; Horace grieves for his countrymen in the dynasts' armies.'

104. Cf. App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.85–6, Plut. *Pomp.* 79–80; if Servius is right the circumstances of Pompey's death so struck Vergil that he let them influence his description of Priam's end: 2.557ff. *iacet ingens litore truncus. . .* (Servius: *Pompei tangit historiam*). The location of the assassination as well as the beheading was part of the horror of Pompey's death because after his murder and decapitation in the coastal waters the rest of his body received ignominious 'burial' on the beach (App. *Bell. Civ.* 2.86). Lucan of course makes much of this: 8.698ff., 712ff.

105. Thus Nisbet – Hubbard II.9: 'Horace's generous attitude towards Pompey (21 n.) and Cato (24 n.) can *only* reflect the impartiality of his model.' They comment similarly on 29ff. and 33ff.: 'The exclamations against civil war suit *Pollio's* professed opinions . . .'. The emphases in both quotations are mine.

106. *Ode* 3.21. M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, *nobilis*, orator, soldier, republican, convert to the cause of Octavian, consul with Octavian in 31 B.C., patron of a circle of poets whose most prominent member was Tibullus . . . Perhaps this last distinction explains why he merits a touch of

of lesser degree' see Syme *Augustan Aristocracy* 386, Nisbet and Hubbard on the poems in question, also Nisbet and Hubbard on 1.18. On the Ode to Quinctius who may be one of these lesser senators, who may indeed be the brother-in-law of Pollio (see n. 7 above), whose Ode anyway occupies the mildly honorific position of beginning the second half of Book 2 (2.11, see above p. 69), I have, for the moment, just this to say: it is an 'Invitation Poem', intimate in content and tone.[107] The significance of this observation will emerge in the next chapter.

Before considering other Odes to the grandee Maecenas, I have a comment to make on a poem which is *not* to a grandee, *Ode* 1.9.

The reader of Horace is, bit by bit, asked to regard him as a new and Roman Alcaeus.[108] An interesting question is therefore posed. Where and how does Horace deploy what we call the 'Alcaic' strophe or stanza? Direct evidence in fact is lacking that this strophe was so named in Horace's time. But later witnesses (see appendix pp. 98–9) suggest that the sequence of lines named by us in this way would have borne a comparable title in Horace's time; or more generally but more importantly, they would have been considered particularly Alcaeus' property, his own especial blazon. On top of the evidence of later witnesses, one is also of course tempted to draw inferences from the Roman Alcaeus' own practice; but since I wish to build on the fact that the Alcaicness of Alcaics was for Horace a *datum*, I had better regard that procedure as, for the moment, inadmissible. I therefore refer the reader to my appendix and for the moment make the assumption: in Horace's time the 'Alcaic strophe' would have been recognized as such, and regarded as Alcaeus' particular blazon.

So: Where and how does Horace deploy this special metre? Where and how does he first use it?

The reader will be unsurprised to find that the great block of 'Roman Odes' (3.1–6) is all in this metre. He will probably be equally unsurprised

Horace's jocularity. Messalla Corvinus was presumably upright and sober, not the man for girls (*Venus . . .*, 21ff.) and wine (8ff.); it was Messalla the Augur (see Syme) who was the drunk. Note too the implications of the *dispositio* of Messalla's Ode: in Syme's unmatchable words, 'Dazed from the impact of the ode to Pollio [2.1], the reader on recovering would ask where his rival in oratory was to be found. He would have to wait for some time, and keep attentive.'

Note that Horace's comment on M. Cato's use of wine (11f. *narratur et prisci Catonis/saepe mero caluisse uirtus* is not simply a 'scandalous statement' (Williams *The Third Book of Horace's Odes* 116); it is something funnier than that, a wilful distortion of something believed to be true. Cf. Sen. *De Tranquillitate Animi* 17.4 *nec in eadem intentione aequaliter retinenda mens est, sed ad iocos deuocanda. . . . et Cato uino laxabat animum curis publicis fatigatum . . .*

107. Cf. Lyne *Latin Love Poets* 235f.

108. *Odes* 1.1.33f., 1.32 (with Lyne *Latin Love Poets* 201–3), 3.30.13, *Epist.* 1.19.32f., 2.2.99.

to find (a) that such a uniform sequence is exceptional for Horace and (b) that Horace takes care not to type-cast his metres: the Sapphic stanza, for example, is used for serious political poetry (e.g. 1.12), and the Alcaic stanza for sympotic poetry (e.g. 1.17). But the *first* use of the Alcaic stanza will, as I say, be of particular interest. We might expect that its tone and content will indicate the particular aspect of that multi-faceted Greek poet[109] with which Horace wished primarily or most prominently to associate himself. We might have other and more specific expectations. The great Roman Odes are all in Alcaics: the first poem in Alcaics will exhibit Horace in his serious and public role . . . the new Roman Alcaeus will take an obvious opportunity, and confer the tribute of his first poem in the special metre on a great man. . . . But none of this is so.

Horace makes us wait for his first Alcaic poem, and elaborately prepares for it. He opens Book 1 with a sequence known as the Parade Odes: *Odes* 1.1–9. In the bulk of the poems in Books 1–3, Horace is in essence basing himself on just three metrical patterns;[110] but in *Odes* 1.1–9 he contrives, by exploiting the flexibility of his third main metrical scheme (the Asclepiadic) and by having recourse to Archilochean metres, to offer a sequence of poems each in a different metrical form. Nine Odes, all in different metres: it is a piece of technical virtuosity that Horace does not repeat. And, introduced with a flourish at the end of these Parade Odes, is his first Alcaic poem: 1.9, the sympotic 'Soracte' Ode, addressed to 'Thaliarchus', which is, significantly (I think), an *eromenos* name.[111] At all events the Ode is a drinking poem which in one form or other (in lines 18ff. if nowhere else) includes that other component of pleasure, love.

109. Political poems, poems on mythical topics, hymns, *sympotica*, love poems – see Page *Sappho and Alcaeus* 149ff. for examples. It is the flexibility and range of Alcaeus' poetry to which Horace draws attention in 1.32 (Lyne *Latin Love Poets* 201–3).

110. The Alcaic strophe, the Sapphic strophe, and variants of Asclepiadic strophe, i.e. strophes based on the choriamb. Note that not only should a poem like 1.33 or 1.26 be seen as an Asclepiadic strophe, but so should apparently stichic Asclepiadic poems like 1.1, 11, 18 and 3.30. Bohnenkamp *Die horazische Strophe* 79–84 persuasively argues that they are actually felt to be in distich units.

111. See Nisbet – Hubbard ad loc. 'But this by itself is not sufficient justification for suggesting a sentimental implication.' The poem surely dices with it. How do we expect the Ode to develop after *nec dulcis amores/sperne puer* (15f.), given the possible implications of the name, and given (say) *Sat.* 2.3.325 *mille puellarum, puerorum mille furores*? But it does not develop the way we expect – the way I expect. With delicacy and wit, Horace confounds expectations, and the potential lover becomes the avuncular adviser. See too West *Reading Horace* 6 on the etymological game Horace is playing with the name Thaliarchus: West identifies another significance; see also West's good interpretation of the character of Horace's 'young friend' on p. 7. But West detects no dicing with eroticism. His discussion is excellent, however, on the poem's unity of time and place: esp. pp. 5–8.

Thus Horace's first Alcaic poem, so elaborately prepared for, does not exhibit the Roman Alcaeus in his serious, political aspect, nor is it used to confer honour upon a grandee. We might note, too, that had it been a prominent poem honouring a grandee, it would also have been a means of self-advertisement. 'The great Ode to [Augustus],' we would have said, 'Horace's first poem in Alcaics: the Roman Alcaeus makes his literary identity conspicuous.' Instead we have *uides ut alta . . .*: well known to us, of course, but relatively inconspicuous in subject matter on first reading.

I take Horace's tactic here to be – besides refusing to satisfy facile expectations – to give advance notice of, or to prepare for, the trick he is going to play over the next few years. He is able and willing to be the public and political poet, but when (as we detect) he gets tired, displeased or embarrassed by the role, he has an excuse to hand: my *lyra* is naturally *iocosa* (*Ode* 3.3.69), my lyrics merely *ludicra* (*Epist.* 1.1.10).[112] For a Roman Alcaeus who sets store by this game, it is convenient that, when we turn to his first poem in the Alcaic metre, its tone is indeed, comparatively speaking, *iocosa*: the sympotic poem to Thaliarchus.

To sum up: Horace exploits the possibilities offered by *dispositio* to honour expected honorands – and to honour some unexpected ones too. He chooses not to honour many grandees at all. Meanwhile he also exploits *dispositio* to undermine poems in other respects quite honorific of great persons and events. For this last, displacement is the favourite mechanism: Sestius gets 1.4, not 1.3; *nunc est bibendum* is the penultimate, not the ultimate poem of the book, and so on. And 'sapping' is already in evidence.

112. Cf. above p. 78.

Appendix 1

The Alcaic Stanza or Strophe

Question: What is the evidence for the metre of, say, *Odes* 3.1–6 being particularly if not exclusively associated with Alcaeus in Horace's time? What is the evidence for that metre being known as an 'Alcaic strophe'?

Care must be taken of course since all the strophes which Horace employs, including the 'Sapphic', were to be found in the books of Alcaeus. But consider the following facts:

1) Hephaestion *Encheiridion* 7.8 calls Alcaeus 328 (Z 4) LP, i.e. the pattern of Horace *Ode* 3.1.4, an 'Alcaic decasyllable'. At *Encheiridion* 14.3, he calls Alcaeus 307 (I (a)) LP, i.e. the pattern of *Ode* 3.2.1 and 2, an 'Alcaic hendecasyllable'.

2) Testimonium 12 in D.A. Campbell's Loeb *Greek Lyric* Vol. I, p. 221 (which is Diomedes in Keil 1.521.31–522.1) appears to give us exactly what we want, albeit from a later date: the name and definition of an Alcaic stanza. In fact the text of Diomedes is probably lacunose at a crucial point, and the phrase *Alcaicum metrum* refers not to the stanza (as Campbell translates it) but to what we know as the first line of the Alcaic strophe, i.e. to what Hephaestion calls an 'Alcaic hendecasyllable'. However, Diomedes does then – having referred to this *Alcaicum metrum* – proceed to describe, in sequence (in his own curious way), the four lines of an Alcaic stanza. He concludes: *quartus, qui strophen cludit, constat ex dimetro heroico et dimetro trochaico*. This, to a reader of generous disposition, is tantamount to identifying and naming our 'Alcaic stanza'.

3) Diomedes in Keil 1.509.32–510.7 writes thus: *Alcaicum ab Alcaeo inuentum in Horatio tale est* <and he quotes *Ode* 1.9.1, and 'analyses' it>. *Alcaicum aliud in Horatio tale est* <and he quotes 1.16.3, and discusses it>. *Alcaicum aliud in Horatio tale est* <and he quotes 1.17.4>. If we suppose that he takes the reduplication of the first *Alcaicum* as self-evident, he is describing in sequence the constituents of an 'Alcaic stanza' and naming them as Alcaic. Again, therefore, he is virtually both naming and identifying our Alcaic stanza as such. He prefers however to talk in terms of lines, as Hephaestion had done – and as our next witness does.

4) Horace's scholia 'pseudo-Acro' open the note on *Ode* 3.1 with the comment *metrum duobus uersibus Alcaicum, tertius iambicus dimeter ypercatalecticus, quartus Pindaricus*. They have longer versions of the same message in the introduction to 1.9, much the same description of the metre in other Alcaics.

The least helpful to my purpose, the scholia of 'pseudo-Acro', 'comprise a shifting agglomeration of material from a variety of sources . . . ; the nucleus of the compilations seems to have been formed in the early fifth century A.D.'[1] The fourth-century grammarian Diomedes, who is most helpful to my purpose, specializes in metrics in his third book, and is known to have used Varro for at least some of his metrical material.[2] It seems to me probable therefore that an 'Alcaic strophe' would have have been recognized as such in Horace's time, and would have been seen as, so to speak, the blazon of that poet. If we now allow ourselves to draw inferences from the practice of the Roman Alcaeus himself – his use of the metre for the showpiece Roman Odes, for example – this impression is strengthened.

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1. For information on the ancient commentators on Horace see Nisbet – Hubbard I.xlvii–li. The quotations are from pp. xlix–l.
2. See Keil *Grammatici Latini* I.LV.

HORACE

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