

natural phenomenon "woman" in its essence, the principle of the "eternal feminine." There is then as little control over Pyrrha when viewed in her archetypal import as "woman" as there is over the sea. The youth is both put to scorn and pitied because he does not understand Pyrrha. He sees only the girl, not the sea,<sup>9</sup> and when, in the future, he encounters "the sea," he will be utterly confused (*emirabitur*). Though he will experience its storms many times (*quotiens*), he will still be "unaccustomed" (*insolens*). He will not understand "the sea," he does not, that is, understand the essential, archetypal nature and meaning of "Pyrrha." And not only the youth but all men are miserable who are exposed to Pyrrha's charm without really knowing her (*intemptata*). But we note that the youth is envisioned as *miser* as well as *insolens* and *nescius*, even after Pyrrha has been quite thoroughly and repeatedly *temptata* by him in her moodiness and inconstancy. Evidently, the experience has to be understood to be salutary. When the poet says *miseri quibus intemptata nites*, therefore, he is suggesting that all men are bound for misery who do not apprehend her essential nature as "woman," as an elemental, natural force, to whom moral standards, as those of constancy and faith, simply are not applicable.

9. Note the parallel positions of *Pyrrha* (3), *aequora* (7), and *nescius* (11).

10. Nisbet (*Comm.*) describes Pyrrha as "the wayward beauty of fiction." She is that and more. Literary historians can be so preoccupied with literary parallels and influences that they do not appreciate their function in the particular context and thus fail to appreciate the uniqueness of the individual poem, seeing only artifice where there is art.

11. It may be of interest here to recall Milton's apt phrase "the stern God of Sea" (Storrs, p. 35), and to note the

The poet has come to understand Pyrrha. He is now a free man and grateful for it.<sup>10</sup>

I conclude therefore that the poet attributes his rescue and present independence not to Venus but to his own intellectual insight and moral *virtus*. An appropriate symbol for this in the poem is the *deus*. As on the metaphorical level Neptune has power over the sea, so on the literal level the man of right understanding and proper values has the personal autonomy which gives him superiority over the female.<sup>11</sup>

Nisbet says (*Comm.*), "The Pyrrha ode is not sentimental, heartfelt, or particularly pretty. It may be admired for rarer virtues, which have eluded the myriad translators, wit, urbanity, and astringent charm." One can agree with this assessment but, as I hope to have shown, a careful reading indicates beneath the brilliant surface a deeper and more serious import, and this is lost or dissipated if we read *deae* for *deo*. *Deae* effects a "prettier" but also, I believe, a different and inferior poem. A. E. Housman criticized the change as "shallow."<sup>12</sup> Nisbet (*Comm.*) believes that "the vast majority of readers will greatly prefer to follow the manuscripts." I hope he is right.

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rendition of the poem's conclusion by John Boyle, fifth Earl of Ortery: "Passion no more, with all its glitt'ring Train / Of frantick Joys, shall tempt me out again; / But noble Reason shall the Tide controul, / And virtue fix her Empire in my Soul." Swift wrote to Boyle in 1735: "I think the whole conveys the very ideas of Horace" (Storrs, p. 46). Finally, it is perhaps not too farfetched to compare Neptune in *Aen.* 1. 124-56.

12. In his lectures. This is mentioned, to their credit, by both Campbell and Nisbet (*Comm.*).

## THE TRIAL OF C. JUNIUS SILANUS<sup>1</sup>

"The care taken to prevent a serious defense would suggest that the motive of the prosecution was not justice, but the ruin of Silanus." F. B. Marsh<sup>2</sup> here argues that this was Tacitus' view of the case, and that his source for this view was the family tradition of the Junii

Silani. That the family peddled this view is said by Marsh to have been due (1) to a desire to excuse themselves for deserting Silanus "in the hour of danger"; and (2) to a desire to extenuate his offences, because his guilt on the extortion charge was undeniable.

1. Tac. *Ann.* 3. 66-69. For discussions, see R. S. Rogers, *Criminal Trials and Criminal Legislation under Tiberius* (Middletown, 1935), pp. 66-70; B. Walker, *The Annals of Tacitus* (Manchester, 1952), pp. 98-99; F. B. Marsh, "Tacitus

and Aristocratic Tradition," *CP*, XXI (1926), 305 ff.; E. Koestermann, "Die Majestätsprozesse unter Tiberius," *Historia*, IV (1955), 104-5.

2. Marsh, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

It is the purpose of this paper to suggest that it was indeed Tacitus' view that the object of the case was the ruin of Silanus, but that this view stemmed not from a family tradition eager to cover up the truth, but from the historian's own understanding of the trial and its circumstances. Further, I hope to show that Tacitus did not regard Silanus' condemnation as an act of tyranny on Tiberius' part.<sup>3</sup>

Briefly, the record of the case is as follows: after his proconsulship of Asia (A.D. 20–21), C. Junius Silanus was indicted by the people of Asia for extortion. Advantage was evidently taken of his indictment by three senatorial colleagues, Mamercus Aemilius Scaurus, Junius Otho, and Bruttidius Niger, to press treason charges in addition—offenses against the divinity of Augustus and the majesty of Tiberius. The prosecution was then further joined by two members of the ex-proconsul's staff, Gellius Publicola and M. Pasconius. Not only did Silanus have to face this weight of accusatory power without, Tacitus says, any great argumentative or oratorical skill himself, but the emperor too was insistent in his cross-examination of the defendant. His slaves were sold for examination under torture; his potential *patroni* were warned not to help him. Accordingly, Silanus abandoned his defense, and wrote to the emperor "[codicillos] quibus invidiam et preces miscuerat."

For punishment, Tiberius quoted the Augustan precedent of L. Valerius Messala Volesus, and proposals were made that Silanus be banished to Gyarus (later modified by Tiberius to Cythnus), but that some of his property should be allowed to his son. The finale was a proposal from P. Cornelius Dolabella that the emperor should intervene more frequently in the matter of provincial appointments to prevent men of Silanus' character from ever getting provinces. The emperor refused, arguing that such a strengthening of his powers would weaken the laws, and that one

could never tell how people would conduct themselves.<sup>4</sup> The result was general welcome for the sentiments expressed by the emperor, and later<sup>5</sup> a decree by the people of Asia of a temple to Tiberius, Livia, and the senate in gratitude for the punishment of Silanus and of Lucilius Capito the following year.<sup>6</sup>

Plainly, there are problems in Tacitus' account that make it less than easy to follow in places. For example, why was the prosecution pushed so hard in every aspect, especially when the people of Asia would evidently have had little difficulty in making their case? What was the attitude of Tiberius to the case?

We should first of all pay due heed to the historian's introductory remark, and the context in which this episode is placed. In the preceding chapter (*Ann.* 3. 65), Tacitus has talked at some length of senatorial *adulatio*, recalling Tiberius' exasperation with the Conscript Fathers, "O homines ad servitutem paratos!" From simple self-abasement, Tacitus says (*Ann.* 3. 66. 1), the senate (*not* the emperor) turned to vindictiveness ("ab indecoris ad infesta transgrediebantur"). In other words, Tacitus appears to see members of the senate as bent on the ruin of Silanus, particularly in the persons of Mam. Scaurus, Junius Otho, and Bruttidius Niger. None of these three senators would have felt flattered by the portrait that Tacitus affords them. Junius Otho was an upstart senator who made his way as a parasite of Sejanus. Bruttidius Niger was even worse, in that he had an art which he preferred to use to no good purpose; he too seems to have been a follower of Sejanus.<sup>7</sup> Mam. Scaurus was the worst of all, for he was guilty of the sin of being unworthy of his ancestors.

The treason charges that they brought are left ill-defined by Tacitus ("violatum Augusti numen, spretam Tiberii maiestatem"); perhaps this is because, as Rogers suggests,<sup>8</sup> they were not received. Nevertheless, such charges might

3. *Ibid.*, p. 305: "Tacitus expressly admits the guilt of the accused, yet treats his condemnation as an act of tyranny."

4. But cf. his action in refusing to allow the extravagant and poverty-stricken C. Galba to take part in the lots for Asia or Africa (*Ann.* 6. 40. 3).

5. *Ann.* 4. 15. 5–6.

6. In the case of Lucilius Capito, an imperial procurator,

the provincials received the emperor's encouragement to prosecute (*Ann.* 4. 15. 3). For a senatorial reaction to such "power" on the part of provincial assemblies, see Thrasea Paetus' remarks (*Ann.* 15. 20. 2 ff.).

7. *Iuv. Sat.* 10. 83.

8. Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–68.

cover a multitude of sins, and Tiberius' attitude in the past had been arbitrary enough to leave Silanus in considerable uncertainty, not to say hazard. On the one hand, there was Tiberius' firm dismissal of the charge against Rubrius in A.D. 15<sup>9</sup> ("violatum periurio numen Augusti") with the words, "non ideo decretum patri suo caelum, ut in perniciem civium is honor verteretur." Yet in the same year, there was the case against Granius Marcellus,<sup>10</sup> not unlike this one in the conjoining of *maiestas* and *repetundae* charges; there, as I have argued elsewhere,<sup>11</sup> the disrespect to Augustus' memory greatly annoyed the emperor, as it certainly did also in the case of Appuleia Varilla in A.D. 17.<sup>12</sup> No less arbitrary was the emperor's attitude to insults made against himself. Tacitus<sup>13</sup> reports that the *maiestas* law was activated in Tiberius' reign because the emperor had been upset at scurrilous verses circulating about himself; yet in the case of Appuleia Varilla, he demanded that no cognizance be taken of such charges. Such arbitrary behavior on his part (albeit not from malice) was bound to leave the field open to informers and accusers who might at least attempt to profit by it.

In this case, the only details that Tacitus gives of the supplementary charges are the precedents cited by Mam. Scaurus,<sup>14</sup> which are all of *repetundae* cases. Apart from the criticisms that he levels against the three senatorial accusers, Tacitus simply comments that these great *repetundae* cases of the Republic were hardly real precedents for combined *repetundae-maiestas* charges in the Principate.

Tacitus makes it clear that there was no doubt that Silanus was guilty on the extortion charges; his statement is unequivocal. Even so, B. Walker maintains that "from this point Silanus is viewed not as a convicted profiteer, but as a representative of all the guiltless who have ever been condemned." This is surely to

overstate and misunderstand Tacitus; to a degree, of course, he does regard Silanus as a victim, in that the opportunity offered by his extortion trial was well taken to embarrass him further. He is assailed by his senatorial enemies—men skilled in speaking, as Otho, Niger, and Scaurus certainly were<sup>15</sup>—while his provincial accusers were *facundissimi totius Asiae*. Such a weight of accusers would have cowed even an expert speaker, let alone Silanus, whom Tacitus calls *orandi nescius*. Tacitus is simply concerned that Silanus, because of his obvious guilt on the one count, might be additionally condemned on the basis of some rather vague and rancorous allegations. Nor must we forget the element of character assassination in Roman rhetoric. A good example is to be found in the trial of Cn. Piso, where the prosecution (in the person of Fulcinus Trio) started off with outdated irrelevancies on Piso's governorship of Spain (*vetera et inania*).<sup>16</sup>

Up to this point, the emperor has not been mentioned; but his entry into the case is seen to contribute to Silanus' general discomfiture ("non temperante Tiberio quin premeret voce vultu, eo quod ipse creberrime interrogabat, neque refellere aut eludere dabatur, ac saepe etiam confitendum erat, ne frustra quaesivisset"). This "merciless harrying," as Walker calls it, should not be understood as something artificially introduced into the proceedings by Tacitus. There was much in Silanus' alleged conduct to annoy Tiberius—his disrespect to the dead Augustus, and his provincial misgovernment. It is reasonable to assume from the emperor's later quotation of the Augustan precedent of L. Valerius Messala Volesus that it was the maladministration charge that especially annoyed him here; further, Tiberius had a record of making high demands on his provincial governors.<sup>17</sup> In an issue of this sort, the emperor could indeed be implacable;<sup>18</sup> and

9. *Ann.* 1. 73. 2–3.

10. *Ann.* 1. 74.

11. See my article, "Tiberius and the Spirit of Augustus," *G and R*, XIII (1966), 207 ff.

12. *Ann.* 2. 50.

13. *Ann.* 1. 72. 5.

14. On these precedents, see E. Badian, "Mam. Scaurus Cites Precedent," *CR*, VIII (1958), 216 ff.

15. For Otho, see *Sen. Contr.* 9. 33 and 37; for Bruttidius

Niger, *ibid.*, 9. 35; for Scaurus, *ibid.*, 10. *praef.* 2–3.

16. *Ann.* 3. 13. 2. Piso had been in Spain a decade before his trial (A.D. 9/10). See *CIL* II. 2703.

17. The general point is made by Suetonius (*Tib.* 31. 2), and particular cases bear it out: Caesius Cordus (*Ann.* 3. 70. 1); Vibius Serenus (*Ann.* 4. 13. 2); Lucilius Capito (*Ann.* 4. 15. 3); Pomponius Labeo (*Ann.* 6. 29. 1–3); C. Galba (cf. n. 4).

18. Cf. his attitude to Cn. Piso's armed attempt to retake Syria (*Ann.* 3. 14. 4).

his implacability might take the form of a frighteningly grim demeanor. Again, the case of Piso provides an example,<sup>19</sup> as it does also for an unceasing barrage of questions when the emperor was especially anxious to know the truth.<sup>20</sup> "Merciless harrying" might describe the action, but it tends to mislead with regard to the motive for the questioning. Tacitus' point is surely not that the emperor wanted to force Silanus into false admissions; the historian does, however, see that, faced with the emperor in this mood, Silanus *felt* that he had no alternative but to give him satisfaction (*ne frustra quaesivisset*). It is the corollary of Silanus' fear (*proprio in metu*), not of any intended cruelty on the emperor's part.

There follow two extremely difficult points: the selling of Silanus' slaves for examination under torture, and the "silencing" of his potential *patroni*. First, the evidence of the slaves. I have argued elsewhere<sup>21</sup> that, though the practice of using slaves' evidence against their master was generally frowned upon, Augustan pronouncements on the subject had led to a greater flexibility.<sup>22</sup> It is true that there seems little need for an expedient so generally disliked in a case that apparently could be proved with little difficulty; one can only presume that Tiberius, in view of his general attitude on maladministration, sanctioned the practice in a case which, although clear, could be described as an *atrocious maleficium*. Tacitus' description of Silanus' conduct in Asia ("nec dubium habebatur *saevitiae captarumque pecuniarum teneri reum*") would appear to justify such an interpretation on the emperor's part.

Secondly, the *maiestas* charges (*Ann.* 3. 67. 3). The difficulty here is acute. Is this a reference back to the *maiestas* charges mentioned at the outset as having been brought by the three senators? Or was this a new develop-

ment? If so, against whom were the charges brought—against Silanus himself, or his relatives? Again, is Tacitus referring to charges that were brought or merely threatened? In the first place, there seems no obvious reason why treason charges against Silanus should prevent his relatives from defending him. Such charges had not deterred M. Lepidus, L. Piso, and Livineius Regulus from acting as *patroni* to Cn. Piso;<sup>23</sup> indeed in that case, Tiberius had spurred the *patroni* on to their duty to Piso.<sup>24</sup> It is, however, true that there was a certain reluctance to come forward in such a situation; Piso had found that, and so had Libo Drusus.<sup>25</sup> In the latter case, those approached had made various excuses, but, according to Tacitus, all had the same fear. Its nature he does not specify, although in view of what he says about *delatores* at the opening of his account of that trial, it is reasonable to assume that their fear was of being caught in the net themselves. Indeed, there must have been few members of the senate who had not at some time let fall injudicious remarks of which an assiduous *delator* could take advantage.<sup>26</sup>

Editors and translators have been divided over the exact meaning of the passage. G. Ramsay suggests that these were charges trumped up against the likely *patroni*, while most nowadays prefer to understand a reference to the charges against Silanus. Two points, however, appear to tell against this latter view: first, there is nothing in the text to indicate that this is a reference back to the charges mentioned in 66. 2; second, the imperfect, *subdebantur*, seems to convey what was on the point of happening, on the analogy of that vivid Tacitean conditional construction having *ni* with the subjunctive in the protasis, and the imperfect indicative in the apodosis.<sup>27</sup> In the present passage the

19. *Ann.* 3. 15. 4.

20. The questioning of Piso's son (*Ann.* 3. 16. 3, *crebris interrogationibus*).

21. See my article, "The Trial of M. Scribonius Libo Drusus," *Historia*, forthcoming.

22. In particular, a statement of 8 B.C. (Dio 55. 5. 4), advocating the use of such testimony *δοκίμης ἀν' ἡμέρας τοιούτου τινός γένηται*. Paulus (Dig. 48. 18. 8) preserves an edict of A.D. 8, allowing the use of slaves' testimony in general in the trial of "capitalia et atrociora maleficia." Cf. R. S. Rogers, "Ignorance of the Law in Tacitus and Dio," *TAPA*, LXIV (1933), 25–26.

23. *Ann.* 3. 11. 2. Cf. the case of C. Sempronius Gracchus in A.D. 23 (*Ann.* 4. 13. 3–5).

24. *Ann.* 3. 12. 9: "si quos propinquus sanguis aut fides sua patronos dedit, quantum quisque eloquentia et cura valet, iuvate periclitantem."

25. *Ann.* 2. 29. 1.

26. The activities of the *delatores* in the cases of Libo Drusus and of Titius Sabinus illustrate the lengths to which the assiduous *delator* would go to collect his information (see *Ann.* 2. 27. 2 and 4. 69. 1–5).

27. See H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford, 1896), I, 57 (§5061).

clause introduced by *ne quis* may be taken as equivalent to the protasis of a conditional clause. If this interpretation is accepted, then the *maiestas* charges were threats, and logically the only people capable of being threatened at this stage were the likely *patroni*. In any case, there seems no ground to assume with Walker that it is Tacitus' contention that "Tiberius deliberately cuts off all possibility of help for him [Silanus]." Nothing in the account suggests that the emperor was responsible for these charges; and we have seen already that in the very first sentence of his account of the trial, Tacitus makes it clear that it was a senatorial group that was bent on Silanus' ruin, not the emperor.

The lack of assistance and his own lack of rhetorical facility conduced Silanus to abandon his defense. During an adjournment he addressed himself to the emperor by letter, "quibus invidiam et preces miscuerat." With whom was the *invidia* concerned? Surely not the emperor, who would thus be less amenable to his entreaties. The *invidia* is best understood as having been directed against those of his senatorial colleagues who were assailing him. In view of Silanus' offense, however, the emperor was bound to receive his pleas with a deaf ear. The proven maladministration would have blotted all else from his mind, just as Piso's armed attack on Syria occupied Tiberius' mind to the exclusion of the real possibility of a miscarriage of justice on the charge that Piso had poisoned Germanicus.

That Tiberius' mind was made up is clear; nor was he "sheltering behind the example of Augustus."<sup>28</sup> That reign had produced a notorious example of a murderous proconsul of Asia in the person of L. Valerius Messala Volesus.<sup>29</sup> This was a realistic precedent for the punishment of the *saevus* Silanus—and incidentally more realistic than the cases of L. Aurelius Cotta (144 B.C.) and Ser. Sulpicius

Galba (149 B.C.), quoted by Scaurus. L. Piso, the *pontifex*,<sup>30</sup> called upon as senior ex-consul for his opinion, spoke of the emperor's *clementia*—fittingly enough, since that virtue was being extolled on a coin issue of the year.<sup>31</sup> Nor is he castigated by the historian for *adulatio*; in any case, it could reasonably be said that the emperor had shown his *clementia* in apparently taking no notice of the charge arising from *spreta Tiberii maiestas*. Piso suggested as a penalty *interdictio* and *relegatio* to the island of Gyaros, a particularly unpleasant place of exile.<sup>32</sup> Two modifications were made: (1) Tiberius, in response to a request from the defendant's sister, Junia Torquata, changed the place of exile from Gyaros to the neighboring island of Cythnus, at once larger and more civilized; (2) Cn. Lentulus (the Augur) excepted from the confiscation implicit in Piso's *sententia* the money Silanus had inherited from his mother<sup>33</sup> and allowed it to Silanus' son. A modification not unlike this had been made in the case of Cn. Piso's son.<sup>34</sup>

The final move in the case was a speech by Silanus' consular colleague of A.D. 10, P. Cornelius Dolabella, criticized here and elsewhere<sup>35</sup> by Tacitus for his *adulatio*. He attacked Silanus' character, adding that nobody of such a character should be eligible for a governorship, and that the emperor should be the judge of this. Tiberius rejected Dolabella's urgings, arguing that punishment should follow crime, and that, in any case, people, when placed in such positions of responsibility, often belied their reputations.

In addition, however, the emperor's speech appears to hint at the reason for the effort of so many senators to ruin Silanus. Both Tiberius and Dolabella refer to rumors that were circulating about Silanus, presumably before his governorship. Dolabella implicitly refers to him as "vita probrosus et opertus infamia"; the emperor replies correctly that

28. B. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

29. Sen. *De ira* 2. 5. 5. (He too had been a proconsul of Asia ca. A.D. 11.) Marsh (*Reign of Tiberius* [Oxford, 1931], p. 153) suggests that Tiberius may have been responsible for Volesus' punishment.

30. R. Syme, "Some Pisones in Tacitus," *JRS*, XLVI (1956), 17 ff.

31. C. H. V. Sutherland, "Two Virtues of Tiberius," *JRS*, XXVIII (1938), 129 ff.

32. *Ann.* 3. 69, 8 and 4. 30. 2.

33. The mother was either Atia (Madvig), a relative of Augustus, or Appia (Weidemann), which would explain the names of his son, C. Appius Junius Silanus (cos. A.D. 28), and his niece, Junia Claudilla (see *PIR*<sup>2</sup> J 824 and 825).

34. *Ann.* 3. 18. 2.

35. *Ann.* 3. 47. 4.

while he is aware of what is being said about Silanus, "non ex rumore statuendum." A little later in his oration, the emperor is even more explicit—"neque expedire ut *ambitione aliena* trahatur [princeps]." In other words, the emperor was aware that, in a keenly fought contest for these prized proconsulates, every effort would be made to force men to stand down, and that, if the emperor became the arbiter, he would be drawn into a tangled web of charge, countercharge, and rumor.

Significantly, such maneuvering had occurred in the previous year,<sup>36</sup> when Sex. Pompeius had attempted to force Manius Lepidus<sup>37</sup> to withdraw from the *sors Asiae*. It is not difficult to imagine the kind of campaign that had probably been waged to force C. Silanus to withdraw—presumably by people who were less concerned with his morals than with their own improved chance were a strong senior candidate no longer in the field. Dolabella, having the same seniority as Silanus, had an ax to grind; and it is worth noticing that, before Dolabella became proconsul of Africa in A.D. 23–24, Asia had gone to men who were his juniors—Manius Lepidus (proconsul in A.D. 21–22, consul in A.D. 11), and Fonteius Capito (proconsul probably in A.D. 23–24, consul in A.D. 12).<sup>38</sup> In the *sors* of A.D. 20, as well as in that of A.D. 21, the attempt to discredit failed; C. Silanus secured his proconsulship. But in governing badly, he opened the way again to those who were for one reason

or another opposed to his appointment and who now saw their opportunity for vengeance. In such a way, as Tacitus says at the beginning of his account of the case, had the senators progressed from self-abasement to persecution—persecution that achieved its object in the ruin of C. Junius Silanus.

Thus the trial of Silanus falls into place. He received the punishment his actions in Asia clearly merited, but the historian found nothing dignified in the way that his senatorial colleagues took this opportunity to vent their jealousy and spite. It is clear too that Tacitus does not encourage us to search his account for the handiwork of a sinister and destructive tyrant. Given his views on provincial maladministration and on the degree to which the *princeps* should interfere with the senate's running of its own provinces, Tiberius' part in the affair, even if not at all times entirely statesmanlike, was predictable and honest and is portrayed as such by Tacitus. For their own reasons, the senate and, as it transpired, the people of Asia were more than satisfied with the emperor's actions. For Tacitus, it was not Silanus' fate that was disturbing, nor the emperor's conduct; it was the ambitious malevolence of certain senators, a characteristic that in the later years of the reign was to assume disastrous proportions.

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36. *Ann.* 3. 32. 2: "agitandi adversus Manium Lepidum odii nactus."

37. For the identification of Manius Lepidus here, see R. Syme, "Marcus Lepidus Capax Imperii," *JRS*, XLV (1955), 22 ff.

38. See V. Chapot, *La province romaine proconsulaire d'Asie* (Paris, 1904), pp. 305 ff.; and D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, (Princeton, 1950), II, 1581.

### QUALE PORTENTUM: HORACE ODES 1. 22. 13

In one of the most familiar of his Odes, Horace describes the wolf which allegedly fled from him in the Sabine wood as a *portentum*. On the use of the word here, the most recent commentators remark only: "τέρας, πέλωρον, something that goes against the normal laws of nature; the word here has a mock-heroic tone."<sup>1</sup> No annotator appears to have linked

Horace's term to the fact that wolves figure in the prodigy lists of Livy and Julius Obsequens with a fair degree of frequency. That is to say, Horace may well be using *portentum* (= *prodigium*) in a semitechnical sense, in which case the tone would be mock-sacral as well as mock-heroic.

Unlike an ox or calf, a wolf need not speak are silent.

1. R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes, Book I* (Oxford, 1970), p. 269. Kiessling-Heinze