

'inultus' is self-explanatory; thereafter 'ut' was added to indicate what was evidently a comparison and to fill out the metre.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some support for 'inutilis flebo puer' might also be derived from the identical word-shape of a similar iambic dimeter at *Epodes* 5.12, 'insignibus raptis puer' (a point which I owe to the anonymous referee for *CQ*).

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## HORATIANA

### *Odes* 1.3.12–16

nec timuit praecipitem Africum  
decertantem Aquilonibus  
nec tristis Hyadas nec rabiem Noti,  
quo non arbiter Hadriae  
maior, tollere seu ponere volt freta.

There is nothing that renders this punctuation and the standard understanding of these verses (i.e. 'seu tollere seu ponere volt freta') impossible. Parallels can certainly be found (e.g. *Cat.* 4.19; *Prop.* 2.26.33). It is however true that this ellipse of *seu* has no good parallel in the *Odes* and the two examples in the *Satires* (2.5.10; 2.8.16) are much easier to tolerate than the use here. Thus, it may be worth noting that a different view of the verse seems possible. Remove the comma from line 16 and take *tollere* with *maior*: 'than whom there is no master of the Adriatic greater at raising or calming – if he desires – the waters.' *Seu* then = *vel si*, as frequently. Horace has a particular affection for infinitives governed by adjectives (as in line 25 of this poem); Wickham provides a lengthy list at vol. 1, pp. 316–17. At *Satire* 2.3.313 *minor* is so used. Finally, the Homeric original here (*Od.* 10.21–2) probably supports this view of the sentence's structure: *κείνον γὰρ ταμίην ἀνέμων ποίησε Κρονίων/ἤμὲν πανέμεναι ἢ δ' ὀρνύμεν ὄν κ' ἐθέλῃσι*, in which the two infinitives are governed by prior elements and are part of that leading clause, while *ἐθέλῃσι* (= *volt*) is not required for the presence of the infinitives.

### *Odes* 1.6.1–2

scriberis Vario fortis et hostium  
victor Maeonii carminis alite.

Richardson called this passage a *topos amechanos*.<sup>1</sup> Four avenues of approach have been attempted: (1) Dissociate *Vario* from *alite*, taking *Vario* as dative. So G. M. Hirst, with the ancient scholiasts (*alite* = *auspiciis*)<sup>2</sup> and Kenneth Quinn in his 1980 commentary ('On the wings of epic poetry'. Can the Latin really bear this meaning?). Stylistically, separating the apparently parallel terms is hard, the more so when we consider the frequency of the songbird/poet identification. Further, as we shall observe shortly, *Vario* as dative of agent is difficult. (2) Emend *alite* to *aliti* and take *Vario aliti* as dative of agent. But Richardson has shown that in the *Odes* the only clear examples (eight of them) of the dative of agent are all governed by a perfect passive (participle).<sup>3</sup> (3) Take *Vario...alite* as an ablative absolute. But, as Nisbet–Hubbard observe, 'the word-order would be impossible'. (4) Take *Vario...alite* as

<sup>1</sup> L. J. D. Richardson, *CR* 50 (1936), 118.

<sup>2</sup> *CR* 27 (1913), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit. 119. But at *Epist.* 1.19.3 *potoribus* appears to be dative with the present passive.

ablative of agent. This is the view of Nisbet–Hubbard and many recent readers. Right though this may be (and Silius' imitation at 13.409 is strong support), I believe that no example of the so-called 'ablative of personal agent without *a*' is so difficult to bear. Wickham, I think, was right when he wrote (*ad loc.*), 'It goes beyond all the cases quoted to parallel it.'

I find that the examples of the 'ablative of personal agent without *a*', once we get past the broad explanation 'personal agent treated as or viewed as an instrument', can be fitted into the following seven categories (by no means meant to be exclusive of one another): (1) The agent is a 'subordinate', slave, soldier, etc. (2) The agent is unconscious, unwilling or lacking intent. [2a. The agent is a living, though non-human, creature.] (3) The agent is modified by an adjective that implies an act. (4) The personal agent is viewed as a substitute for or equivalent of an implied action, e.g. *testibus*. (5) The personal noun clearly does not designate the originator of the action. (6) The usage occurs in an evidently idiomatic or idiosyncratic expression, e.g. with *comitatus*; or with *capior* in an erotic sense (at least in Ovid: *Her.* 5.126, 19.102; *RA* 554). (7) The usage is the result of metrical exigencies (when no other explanation seems more likely).

Now it will be seen that *scriberis Vario* (abl.)... *alite* falls readily into none of these categories (not even §7: as Richardson noted, Horace could have written *scribere a Vario*). Compounding the difficulty is the proper noun, for using the 'instrumental' ablative of a person is hardly a compliment. Indeed, I know only one such example, that in the Ovidian idiom *capior* + abl.: *Priapus*.../ *Lotide captus erat* (*Fast.* 1.415–16).<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, I believe that Horace did use here the 'ablative of agent', but allowed himself the possibility because of a deliberate ambiguity that mitigated the strangeness of expression. When Horace's reader read *scriberis Vario fortis* he would quite naturally have assumed that *vario* was the adjective, probably in the ablative, and would be completed shortly by a noun in the ablative, giving an ablative of manner or perhaps means. On reaching *alite* he will have found his expectations fulfilled and yet subverted. For the ablative *vario*... *alite* will fall into category 2a above and the phrase makes good sense.<sup>5</sup> Yet, at the same time, the reader recognizes that *vario* (adjective) *alite* (noun) has become *Vario* (proper noun) *alite* (appositive). That the singing bird Horace has in mind is probably a swan and white is unfortunate (though cf. *Carm.* 4.1.10), but the fact is that the poet's name was Varius. (If, however, the bird is a nightingale, like Bacchylides at 3.97–8, *varius* might be an apt epithet.)<sup>6</sup> At all events *varius ales* could be an additional compliment to the poet (compare the encomiastic adjective in the phrase *ὁ σοφὸς κύκνος* at *AP* 5.134.3), stressing his multifaceted talents (perhaps the foremost epic and tragic poet of his day).

### *Odes* 1.7.25–6

quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente,  
ibimus.

It seems to me undeniable that line 25 is intimately related to Sophocles, *Ajax* 550–1, *ὦ παῖ, γένοιτο πατρὸς εὐτυχέστερος*, imitated by Accius in his *Armorum Iudicium*,

<sup>4</sup> Statius, *Theb.* 3.521 reads *auditus Iasone*, but editors justifiably assume this to be corrupt, probably the result of a deliberate change by a scribe who failed to recognize the short Greek *i* in *Iasoni*.

<sup>5</sup> For *varius* ('variegated') of birds, see e.g. Ovid, *Fasti* 5.430; Prop. 3.13.32; and possibly at Verg. *Aen.* 7.32–4 of singing birds.

<sup>6</sup> Aside from physiological considerations, see Hesiod, *Op.* 203 (*poikilodeiros*) with West's and Verdenius' comments *ad loc.*

*virtuti sis par, dispar fortunis patris* (123 W). These words are, after all, placed by Horace in the mouth of Ajax's brother, now suffering because of Ajax's suicide. Certain as it is that Horace is recalling the Sophoclean verse, can we go beyond this? At a minimum, Horace was expecting amused recognition from his readers in coming upon Ajax's famous remark revised for use in his brother's mouth (fortune/better/father). But it should be noted that *melior fortuna parente* (fortune 'kinder' than my father – Nisbet–Hubbard) is perfectly good Latin for 'better fortune than my father's' (*comparatio compendiaria*). While it may be unlikely that Horace's Teucer means this, it is possible that Horace is echoing some Latin version of Ajax's tale in which Ajax's famous words were put this way into Latin (Pacuvius too wrote an *Armorum Iudicium*). Finally, it is even possible that Horace here imitated a Latin predecessor who had Teucer speak these words (echoing his brother Ajax) with the sense 'may I have a *melior fortuna parente*, i.e., a better fortune than my father's', for Telamon himself was a victim of ill-fortune, having lost one son in war, a second to banishment, and having himself in earlier life been exiled from his home in Aegina. Cicero (*Tusc.* 3.39) quotes a tragic fragment that focuses on the unhappy change of fortune in Telamon's life. So it is scarcely inconceivable that in one of the many treatments of Teucer's life (e.g. Pacuvius' *Teucer*), he was represented as praying for better fortune than his father's.

### **Odes 1.18.5–6**

quis post vina gravem militiam aut pauperiem crepat?  
quis non te potius, Bacche pater, teque, decens Venus?

Manuscripts are divided between *crepat* and *increpat*. Ps-Acron read *crepat*, but glossed it with *increpat*. Nisbet–Hubbard and other commentators are reluctant to accept *increpat* as either text or gloss, on the grounds that verse six then becomes very difficult. But even if one reads *crepat* and understands it as 'prates of', one still needs to make a leap (to a weak '*dicit*' in line six). Second, a stronger sense than 'prates of' is desirable in verse five. But there is really no problem in seeing in verse five the meaning 'rails at, complains of' (whether *increpat* or *crepat*) and then moving to verse six, scilicet *laudat*. This is the not uncommon ellipse *e contrario*, a fine example of which occurs at Cic. *Att.* 13.23.3 ('magis enim doleo me non habere cui tradam quam habere [*sc. gaudeo*] qui utar'). See too Livy 45.24.8 where *prosit* must be inferred from *obsit* and Cic. *Fin.* 2.88, 'uterque enim summo bono fruitur, id est voluptate. at enim hic etiam dolore' (with Madvig's comments *ad loc.*).

### **Odes 1.22**

In addition to all the observed nuances and implications underlying Horace's encounter with the wolf, there may also be present a piece of proverbial folk-wisdom. Horace meets the wolf while singing of his Lalage; the wolf runs off. But according to folk-wisdom, sighting of a wolf should have struck the (singing) poet dumb. Horace's point presumably is that (aside from all naturalistic considerations) far from the wolf rendering him mute, his own singing overcame the wolf.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> One could interpret this theme here in a more sophisticated fashion, especially if one pressed the question of whether the wolf saw Horace first or he the wolf. Theocritus 14.22 is not concerned with any such distinction nor is the text at Leutsch *Paroem.* 2.511, but Vergil at *Ecl.* 9.53 is, as is the *Geoponica* 15.1.8.

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