

Thukydides hat den Ablauf des Krieges von Athen her gesehen, nicht nur weil er trotz seiner Verbannung Athener geblieben war und das Schicksal seiner Vaterstadt miterlitt, sondern auch weil gerade auf dieser Seite das Problem der politischen Leitung sichtbar und akut wurde. Die alte Frage, ob Thukydides Persönlichkeits- oder Massenhistoriker ist, kann in dieser Form gar nicht beantwortet werden: gewiß spielt das Volk bei ihm eine große Rolle, und es sieht gar so aus, als ob er die Verantwortung für die sizilische Katastrophe von Nikias auf die Menge abwälzte, aber eben dies, daß Nikias sie nicht in der Hand hatte, um sie nach seiner Einsicht zu lenken, ist ja der Vorwurf, der ihn trifft. Andererseits brachte auch Kleon seine Athener, wenn er ihnen auch einmal eine unliebsame Wahrheit zu sagen mußte, doch nur deshalb hinter sich, weil er sich in der Richtung bewegte, in die die Majorität ohnehin tendierte. Nur dann macht der Staatsmann nach Thukydides überlegene Politik, wenn er die Emotionen der Masse beherrscht, wenn er sie hemmt und anstachelt, so wie es wirklich nötig ist, aber er bleibt allerdings auf das angewiesen, was er aus seinem Volke schöpfen kann.

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HORACE'S EPISTLE TO FLORUS (EPIST. 2. 2)

The clarity with which the line of thought develops in the epistle to Florus, a quality to which Io. Vahlen drew attention eighty years ago ¹⁾, perhaps gives us at least a partial explanation of the fact that so few studies of the epistle as a whole have been published. It would seem that scholars have in general felt that Horace's treatment of the themes which he discusses does not pose problems of sufficient complexity to make worth while a study of the methods of composition used in the epistle ²⁾. In the present article, however, an attempt is made to follow the greater part of the train of thought as it

1) Io. Vahlen, *Gesammelte Philologische Schriften* (1911), I. 511 (= *Z. für die öst. Gym.* 25. 1874. 12).

2) Another reason for the comparative neglect from which the epistle has suffered is doubtless the great attention which has been paid, particularly in this century, to the epistle to the Pisones.

develops and in particular to study the handling of transitions. In this way, it is hoped, some insight may be gained into the technique of composition practised by Horace in one of the most mature of his hexameter poems.

The lines along which any interpretation of the epistle must proceed have been laid down by R. Heinze³⁾ and by Fr. Klingner in the study of the epistle which he included among his "Horazerkklärungen"⁴⁾. At the conclusion of his article Klingner emphasizes that he has given only an outline: "an Beispielen ist das Verhältnis aufgezeigt worden, und es zu erschöpfen, müßte man eine Arbeit für sich schreiben"⁵⁾. The present study does not pretend to be a work of the kind to which Klingner refers; if it succeeds only in preparing the way for such a work, it will have fulfilled its purpose.

The beginning of the epistle is remarkable for the suspense which it induces. Horace puts an imaginary situation before Florus. The form in which he expresses himself is that of a very lengthy conditional sentence. If Florus were to buy a young slave from a man who, though praising him highly, did not omit to point out that he had been known to run away,⁶⁾ he would have no legal redress if this trait in the slave's character once more manifested itself (1-17). The main element in this opening sentence is a speech made by the vendor (3-16) which gives us a vivid picture of the man, intent on selling his dubious bargain. He first calls attention to the slave's beauty and the low price which he has set upon him (3-5). There follows an account of his accomplishments. He is

3) Q. Horatius Flaccus Briefe erklärt von Adolf Kießling, vierte Auflage bearbeitet von Richard Heinze (1914).

4) Fr. Klingner, *Philol.* 90. 1935. 464 ff. Mention should be made of an interesting study of the epistle which is to be found in G. Kettner, *Die Episteln des Horaz* (1900), 159 ff.; his view of the epistle as a whole, however, suffers from an unwillingness to allow that there is a considerable element of ironical humour in Horace's discussion of his life as a poet. Kettner's book does not appear to be as well known, in English-speaking countries at least, as it deserves to be. Two works devoted to the epistle which were not accessible to me are A. Lowinski, *Scholae criticae in Horatii epist. II. libr. II.* (*Jahresber. des königl. katholischen Gymnasiums in Deutsch-Krone für 1875-76*), a study written apparently under the influence of the 'higher criticism' (see H. Fritzsche in *Bursian Jahresb.* 10.1879.13 f.), and J. N. Fischer, *Zu Horaz zweitem Literaturbrief, Progr. Feldkirch 1892*, reviewed by J. Häussner in *Bursian Jahresb.* 93. 1898. 72.

5) *Op. cit.* 468.

6) See below n. 8

a good house-slave (6), but his cultural attainments are stated with some caution: he is *tinged* with some little knowledge of Greek letters (7), and though he is not a trained singer, a man who is drinking will find his voice sweet (9). In general we have the impression that he is talented rather than accomplished: *argilla quidvis imitaberis uda* (8). The vendor realises that his praises may excite suspicion (10 f.), so he points out that his financial position is not embarrassed (12). Such a bargain is not to be had from any of the *mangones* (13 f.)⁷⁾. Then he makes the admission that will cover him in case of legal proceedings later. He at first puts it mildly: once the slave played the slacker and hid under the stairs in fear of punishment (14f.). Only in the last line does a clear indication of the slave's real nature appear:

des nummos, excepta nihil te si fuga laedit (16)⁸⁾.

There follows at last the apodosis of this conditional sentence:

ille ferat pretium poenae securus, opinor (17).

Here in the first person of the verb, *opinor*, the personality of the poet comes before us for the first time. It appears only incidentally, but we are prepared by its occurrence for the emphatic entry of Horace and his own concerns in 20. The two lines which follow the long introductory sentence enlarge upon its apodosis:

*prudens emisti vitiosum; dicta tibi est lex:
insequeris tamen hunc et lite moraris iniqua* (18f.).

Florus will doubtless have been amused by these opening lines, but he may well also have been tempted to echo Sat.

7) It is unlikely that we are intended to think of the vendor as a *mango*, i. e. a professional slave-dealer, see Heinze ad 2 and 13. He is indeed more likely to be a friend of Florus (*non temere a me / quivis ferret idem*, 12 f.). This would add point to the parallel that is to be drawn between the situation put before Florus in 1-19 and that which existed between Florus and Horace himself.

8) Heinze ad 16 states that the point, 'die in der harmlos klingenden und nach Möglichkeit den Mangel herabmindernden Ausdrucksweise (*semel, cessavit, ut fit*) des vorhergehenden Satzes liegt', would be lost if *excepta fuga* were included in the speech. But Horace had spoken plainly to Florus (*dixi me pigrum proficiscenti tibi, dixi ... 20 f.*), and it is reasonable to suppose that the vendor had been equally fair. Furthermore, as Vahlen pointed out, loc. cit., it is difficult to see to what *dicta tibi est lex* (18) refers if 16 is not part of the speech. The original reading, *laedit*, preserved in Bland. vet., has been corrupted to *laedat* because of the proximity of the subjunctives *des* and *ferat*.

1. 2. 23 and ask 'quo res haec pertinet?'. Accordingly in 20 ff. Horace makes clear the relevance of 1-19 and in doing so brings himself, by means of the repeated *dixi* (20), which picks up *dicta . . . est* in 18, vividly before the reader:

*dixi me pigrum proficiscenti tibi, dixi
talibus officiis prope mancum, ne mea saevus
iurgares ad te quod epistula nulla rediret* (20-2).

Seemingly, however, Horace's warning has been of no avail, for Florus has been assailing the legal principles which support him (23 f.). In 20 ff. we are mainly conscious of the parallel between Horace and the vendor, but we should not overlook the fact that Horace, in being a good fellow with only one fault, is like the slave also⁹). Perhaps there is present in the words, *litterulis Graecis imbutus . . . quin etiam canet, indocutum, sed dulce bibenti*, not a little of that εἰρωστέα which Aristotle defined as προσποίησις ἐπὶ τὸ ἔλαττον (Eth. Nic. 1108a 21 ff.).

Having spoken of his failure to keep up his correspondence with Florus, he introduces in 24, rather casually, another point¹⁰). Florus has been complaining also that Horace is no

9) Cf. Kettner, op cit. 160.

10) The view of H. Lucas that we already have in 21 (*talibus officiis prope mancum*) a reference to "die Unfähigkeit zu dichten" cannot be accepted, Festschrift Io. Vahlen (1900), 322. The phrase is explained by the words immediately following, *ne mea . . . rediret*, where *epistula* means a letter of any kind and not, as Lucas gratuitously assumes, a poetic epistle. Determined to demonstrate that the epistle to Florus is a *recusatio*, an "ausgesprochene Weigerung, welche die Erfüllung in sich schließt" (op. cit. 321), Lucas holds that Horace is concerned, not with explaining why he has not composed any *carmina*, but with giving an account of his reasons for ceasing to write poetry of any kind. Having been asked by Florus for a poetic epistle, he here refuses the request and in the course of explaining his refusal he presents him with that for which he had asked. Admittedly Horace gives some reasons which would apply to poetic activity of any kind (e. g. 52-4. 58-64), but as will be seen, the idea of lyric composition occurs again and again [55 ff. (implicitly, see p. 349 and note 18). 59 (reminding us that Florus's interest is in *carmina*). 86. 99. 143. 214 ff. (implicitly, cf. 55 ff. and see p. 357 f.; furthermore the discussion in 109-25 surely refers to a kind of poetry more elevated than the verse epistle], and in any case it is only natural that in defending his decision to write no more *carmina* Horace should use arguments which could be used to justify a refusal to write any kind of verse. Besides, the epistle contains no *refusal* to send Florus an *epistula*; Horace at the outset merely shows him that he has no justification for finding fault because he has not proved a good correspondent. Finally to suppose that a refusal to write a verse epistle would take the form of a farewell to

man of his word, because he has failed to send the lyrics which he has been expecting (24 f.):

*quereris super hoc etiam, quod
exspectata tibi non mittam carmina mendax.*

With this observation which gives the impression of being almost an afterthought Horace has at last arrived, although the reader may not realise it, at the main topic of the epistle.

For the time being nothing further is said about the failure to send lyrics to Florus. We are immediately plunged in 26 into an *αἴτιος*¹¹). It is of a kind not found elsewhere in the satires or epistles, a military anecdote, but Florus, who will have known his Lucilius, will perhaps have been reminded of the *αἴτιοι* concerned with military life which occurred in Book 30¹²). Horace's telling of the story is masterly¹³). Certain elements in the narrative, the pluperfect tense of the main verb in the opening sentence (*perdiderat*, 28), the occurrence of *ut aiunt* (30) and *forte* (34) and the use of direct speech to round off the tale, are paralleled in other *αἴτιοι*¹⁴). At the outset Florus will perhaps have thought that the *αἴτιος* may

poetry in general (as Lucas holds) is to fail to recognise the "unpoetic" nature of the verse epistle (cf. Epist. 2. 1. 250 f.; Sat. 1. 4. 39 ff. also is of relevance here). It is no more correct to say of the epistle to Florus that it is an *Absage* which is what it denies being (op. cit. 322 f.) than to regard Epist. 1. 1 which contains the line, *nunc itaque et versus et cetera ludicra pono* (10), as an example of *recusatio* in the sense which Lucas gives the word. In Epist. 1. 1. 10 Horace means that he is putting lyric poetry aside; his writing of the epistle does not contradict that declaration. The same is true of the epistle to Florus.

11) I use the term *αἴτιος* to refer not only to beast fables, but also to anecdotes of all kinds, little dramatic scenes based on some literary source (e. g. Sat. 2. 3. 187 ff. 295 ff., Epist. 1. 16. 73 ff.) and similar illustrative material. I owe this use of the term to my teacher, Professor E. Fraenkel (cf. Rh. Mus. 73. 1920. 366 ff.).

12) In Lucilius these stories probably sprang from the poet's own experiences during the campaign at Numantia. The only story in the satires or epistles of Horace which undoubtedly springs from the corresponding period in his life (44-2 B. C.) is that told in Sat. 1. 7.

13) Note the contrast between the passionate words of the officer: *'i bone, quo virtus tua te vocat, i pede fausto, / grandia laturus meritorum praemia'* and the reply of the soldier: *'ibit, ibit eo quo vis qui zonam perdidit'*, matter-of-fact but for the repetition of *ibit* which parodies the *i... i* of the officer, cf. Kettner, op. cit. 161.

14) Pluperfect: Epist. 1. 7. 30 and cf. Lucil. 751 Marx. *ut aiunt*: Epist. 1. 6. 40, 7. 49. *forte*: Sat. 1. 9. 1, Epist. 1. 7. 29 and cf. Lucil. 1142. Direct speech to conclude *αἴτιος*: Sat. 2. 3. 151 ff., 6. 115 ff., Epist. 1. 7. 91 ff., 2. 2. 138 ff.

somehow be connected with either or both of the causes for complaint which he had against Horace. But as he read on through this lengthy (15 lines) narrative, he will have become increasingly absorbed in the story itself and at the same time probably have tended to lose sight of the fact that it may be relevant to the charges which Horace had mentioned in 20-5. It is most unlikely that Florus will have grasped the relevance of the story when he reached its conclusion in 40 (that is revealed, and only implicitly, in 50 ff.); rather will he have read on in a state of suspense.

The lines that immediately follow do nothing to relieve that suspense¹⁵). Horace speaks of his upbringing and study in Rome and his further studies in Athens. We are given the impression that his interest was concentrated on philosophy and that when civil war came it was a budding philosopher who left Athens (41-8). With defeat for the side which he had supported came financial difficulties, and in these are to be sought the origins of his poetic career:

*paupertas inpulit audax
ut versus facerem* (51 f.)¹⁶).

Now that he has what is sufficient, he would indeed be mad if he did not prefer sleeping (cf. *pigrum*, 20) to writing *versus*. We are virtually given to understand that his whole poetic career has been an unfortunate episode which sprang from necessity and for which his upbringing had not prepared him. Florus will have smiled at this and, perhaps, have recalled c. 3. 4. 9ff. where Horace, telling of the favour which Heaven had shown him when he was a child, had implied that with him, as with other poets, the gods had manifested the nature of his vocation by causing a miracle to be associated with his childhood. The emphasis laid on his philosophic education prepares us for the concluding portion of the epistle, but Horace does not wish to anticipate this by speaking openly of a return to philosophy. So he prefers to paint a picture of himself enjoying a lazy life now that his poetic career lies behind him; yet the sensitive reader will detect the irony in this and will not be surprised when Horace later comes to

15) Cf. Klingner, *op. cit.* 465.

16) On the question whether *audax* is to be connected with *paupertas* or with *ut versus facerem* see Heinze's discussion *ad loc.*

speak of his concern with learning *verae numerosque modosque . . . vitae*¹⁷).

The poet intends Florus to see that he has drawn a humorous parallel between the soldier whose daring depended upon his financial situation and himself whose poetic activities are similarly determined. It is interesting that both here and in Epist. 1. 1. 4 ff. Horace sees a return to the composition of lyrics in terms of a resumption of fighting, an indication, perhaps, of the opposition and criticism which his lyrics had met and to which Epist. 1. 19 stands witness. In 49-54, however, Horace does not speak specifically of the genre of lyric poetry: *versus* in 52 refers to satires and epodes and in 54 to poetry in general.

The deficiency is supplied in 55-7 where he implicitly tells Florus that the passage of the years has left him incapable of living the kind of life from which lyric poetry springs:

*singula de nobis anni praedantur euntes:
eripuerunt iocos, venerem, convivia, ludum;
tendunt extorquere poemata; quid faciam vis?*¹⁸)

These lines follow most naturally upon those which precede. In giving us an autobiographical sketch and pointing out the difference between his present and his former financial condition Horace has been concerned with the passing of the years, and it is of the effect of this on his way of life and on his capacity for writing poetry that he speaks in 55 ff. It is noteworthy that here, where he puts forward a reason which is clearly intended to be taken quite seriously, Horace does not argue the point at length. It reappears for a moment in 142 and again in 211, and it dominates the last three lines of the epistle (214-6)¹⁹. Thus instead of discussing this matter at length he prefers to refer to it briefly on three occasions and leave it to the reader to understand, without his going into great detail, that advancing years are really connected with his abandonment of lyric poetry.

With *denique* Horace introduces a new and not very weighty consideration²⁰). It is impossible to please everyone:

17) Cf. Klingner, op. cit. 466.

18) For *ioci* in connection with lyric poetry cf. c. 2. 1. 37. Horace plays on the connection of *ludus* with lyrics in Epist. 1. 1. 3 (cf. *versus et cetera ludicra*, 10).

19) Cf. Klingner, op. cit. 465 and 466.

20) It has been suggested by U. Knoche that *faciam* is deliberately ambiguous, that it can mean either "do" or "make" (sc. poetry; cf. ποιῆν) and that the ambiguity smoothes the transition between 57 and 58, Philol.

Florus likes lyrics, another man *iambi*, yet another satires (59 f.). He refers to satires by speaking of *Bionis sermonibus et sale nigro* and then goes on to compare the three men with their different tastes to three guests who cannot agree on what they shall eat. It has been plausibly suggested that the use of *sal niger* in 60 suggested this comparison²¹). This line of argument is concluded at 64.

Another explanation, introduced on this occasion by *praeter cetera*, is put forward in 65 ff. It finds a place more because it gives Horace a chance of writing with amusing indignation about the trials which face the poet in a great city than because it is truly relevant to his decision to turn his back on lyric poetry. Does Florus think that Horace can write *poemata* at Rome *inter tot curas totque labores*? There follows a lively picture of his life in Rome. His social commitments, the traffic and the noise conspire against the composition of poetry. Ironically he says:

i nunc et versus tecum meditare canoros (76).

It is well known, he remarks, that poets flee from the city; yet Florus expects him to sing *inter strepitus nocturnos atque diurnos* and to follow the footsteps of bards; the way which they have trodden is narrow (*contracta . . . vestigia*) and difficult²²).

Horace begins to round off this line of argument with an *αἴτιος*. This tells of a man, called nothing more definite than *ingenium*, who spent seven years of study in the quiet university town that was Hellenistic Athens (*vacuas Athenas*). He became more silent than a statue and excited the laughter of the populace²³). The *αἴτιος* may well have had its origin in

90. 1935. 477 f. But *denique* in 58 clearly introduces a new point (cf. Sat. 1. 1. 92), and it therefore seems most unlikely that Horace intends in any way to raise the subject of 58 ff. in 57.

21) Heinze ad 61.

22) For the narrow way cf. Callim. epigr. 28. 1 f., fr. 1. 25 ff. Pf. On the present passage see Orelli-Baier-Mewes ad 80 where Propert. 4. 1. 14 is cited. Bentley's objections (ad 80) are groundless. Heinze ad 78, comparing Epist. 1. 7. 12, wishes to assume hypallage here: "*contracta* gilt also eigentlich hier . . . von den *vates*, die all ihr Sinnen und Trachten auf die Poesie konzentriert haben, und ist mit leichter Hypallage an *vestigia* angeglichen. Daß dieser Pfad zugleich ein schmaler ist, liegt in der Sache, nicht aber im Worte *contracta*". This view I find extremely difficult to accept; the hypallage assumed seems scarcely easy.

23) The populace of Athens surely (so Heinze ad loc.). We need a definite place to give a contrast with *hic* (84); Wilkins ad loc. is uncon-

Horace's recollection of a man whom he had seen or heard about during his student days in Athens. Its relevance is indicated in the question that follows. It begins with *hic* (in Rome) to point the contrast between Athens and Rome:

*hic ego rerum
fluctibus in mediis et tempestatibus urbis
verba lyrae motura sonum conectere digner?* (84-6)

The task of writing *carmina* in Rome would demand the self-discipline displayed by the genius in Athens. Even there, where eccentricities were perhaps not unusual, the man was a laughing-stock; what would Horace's fate be if he were to live such a life in bustling Rome? His concern with lyric poetry, which had been only implicit in 56, is made quite explicit in 84-6. The level of style in these lines, when compared with that of the epistle as a whole, is somewhat elevated; the conclusion of 85, as Nils-Ola Nilsson has pointed out²⁴), forms part of a "metrical tradition" which can be traced in Ennius, Lucretius and Vergil and which in itself must have suggested to the sensitive ears of Horace's readers a kind of poetry more elevated than the epistle in verse.

In 26-86 Horace has spoken only of his personal situation and has made no mention of other poets. He now turns in 87 ff. to his relations with his colleagues, describing the mutual admiration to which they are given and their lack of self-criticism. It is all very amusing, but there is here perhaps more real relevance to the main theme than we may at first sight be inclined to admit. With Vergil and Tibullus dead Horace probably felt out of sympathy with most contemporary poets, and this lack of sympathetic colleagues may well have been in fact connected with the decision which he defends in the epistle²⁵).

vincing in this matter, although he is surely right in taking *exit* to mean 'turn out' (cf. Ars P. 22) rather than 'go out' (sc. *e domo*), which is Heinze's view. Kettner seems to have taken *statua taciturnius* to mean that the genius, for all his study, never produced anything (ohne doch etwas schaffen zu können, op. cit. 162), a curious interpretation.

24) Nils-Ola Nilsson, *Metrische Stildifferenzen in den Satiren des Horaz* (Studia Latina Holmiensia I) (1952), 68.

25) In the matter of the date of the epistle I follow Vahlen, *Gesammelte Philologische Schriften* (1923), ii. 54 ff. (= *Monatsber. d. Berliner Akad.* 1878. 696 ff.). L. P. Wilkinson has made reference to the effect on Horace of the deaths of Vergil and Tibullus in 19 B. C., *Horace and His Lyric Poetry* (1945), 17.

The discussion begins with an *αἴνος*. Its setting is Rome. Between this and the sentence which concludes the treatment of the previous line of argument there is a link which helps to make the transition smooth — the city of Rome:

*hic ego rerum
fluctibus in mediis et tempestatibus urbis
verba lyrae motura sonum conectere digner?
frater erat Romae consulti rhetor, ut . . .*

The *αἴνος* tells of two brothers, one a rhetorician, the other a lawyer; their mutual admiration was so great that each heard nothing but compliments from the other (87-9)²⁶). A question follows which makes clear the relevance of the story:

qui minus argutos vexat furor iste poetas (90)?

He himself composes lyrics, another (Propertius seems to be meant)²⁷) elegies. With a great air of importance they survey the library on the Palatine (92-4); at the *recitatio* they aim poems at each other, like gladiators who continue to fight wearily until nightfall (95-8). By the vote of his friend Horace comes off from the contest as none other than Alcaeus. Returning the compliment, he declares his friend a veritable Callimachus, but if he seems to want more than that, Horace will elevate him to great heights by describing him as Mimermus (99-101). In 102 f. he sums up his own position: as long as he is composing and a candidate for popularity, he has

26) With some hesitation I follow the reading of the MSS in 87 (the reading *et* instead of *ut* in some of them may be neglected). Editors have adduced various passages in Horace as parallels for the syntax of the *ut*-clause here: Sat. 1. 1. 95, 7. 13, 2. 7. 10, Epist. 1. 16. 12 f. Of these only the last is worth considering: *fons etiam rivo dare nomen idoneus, ut nec frigidior Thraecam nec purior ambiat Hebrus . . .* Wilkins in his attack on the reading of the MSS strangely ignores this parallel, although it had been cited by Bentley whom he in part quotes. If we keep this parallel in mind and at the same time, following the suggestion of Heinze ad loc., take *frater* "in its full sense, including that of brotherly feeling", we should, I think, find the reading of the MSS not unacceptable. Cf. Kießling ad loc.: "Der Nachdruck, der auf *frater* liegt, gelangt in der Voraussetzung des Wortes zum Ausdruck, welches ganz wie ein Demonstrativpronomen wirkt und den Anschluß des konsekutiven *ut . . . audiret* erleichtert: 'Der Art war der eine Brüder des Andern, daß . . .' Ganz ähnlich hieß es 1. 16. 12 . . ." Vahlen also drew attention to the importance of Epist. 1. 16. 12 f. in this connection and suggested the interpretation, "ein Brüderpaar von solcher Art, daß der eine nur des andern Lob singt," Gesammelte Philologische Schriften i. 513 f. (= Z. für die öst. Gym. 25. 1874. 13 f.).

27) See Heinze ad 91.

to put up with much in order to placate the *genus irritabile vatium*; but when he recovers his senses and gives up his poetic career, he can without fear of vengeance close his ears to his friends as they read.

From a discussion of the mutual admiration practised by poets it is only a short step to mentioning those *mala qui componunt carmina* and the opinions which they have of *their own work* (106). Although they are laughed at, they enjoy writing, and if those who have heard their works remain silent, they themselves, happy men, will praise them (106 ff.). We might expect a long and witty account of the bad poet and his self-satisfaction, but as we have in fact already met him in Horace's account of what he has to suffer at the hands of his colleagues, he leaves him and introduces in contrast with *mala carmina* an interesting discussion of the tasks which the poet who wishes to write a *legitimum poema* must carry out (109-25). He will be like a *censor honestus*, venturing to cast out words which, though they may enjoy the security of being looked upon as almost sacred²⁸), nevertheless lack *splendor* and *pondus* and are *honore indigna*²⁹). At the same time he will both revive old words which are *speciosa vocabula rerum* and take over new words which have been brought into being by *usus*, need (115-9)³⁰). The poet will pour out his wealth, *vemens et liquidus puroque simillimus amni* (120 f.)³¹). He

28) *quamvis . . . / . . . versentur adhuc inter penetralia Vestae* (113 f.); see Heinze ad loc.

29) Cf. Ars P. 71, *quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula*.

30) Heinze ad 117 notes that Horace, by using *memorata* in the sense of *dicta*, gives us an example of the revival of old usages which he recommends in 116 ff. For other examples of this kind of procedure see below n. 32. For *usus* cf. Ars P. 71 f. with Heinze's note ad loc.

31) Pure water symbolises the literary ideals of Callimachus and his followers: Callim Ap. 111 f. (*ὀλιγὴ λιβάς*), Fr. 1. 33 f. Pf (*θρόσος*); Anth. Pal. 9. 406. 5 f., 11. 20. But there is a considerable difference between the *ὀλιγὴ λιβάς* of Callimachus and Horace's poet who is *vemens . . . puroque simillimus amni*. The forceful slow of a river finds no place in the ideals of Callimachus who indeed compares the kind of poetry which he dislikes to the *Ἀσσύριος ποταμός* (Ap. 108 f.). Horace, however, uses the image of a river both to criticize poetry (Sat. 1. 4. 11, 10. 50 f. 61 ff.) and, in the present passage, to place his ideal before us. He demands forcefulness as well as purity of diction. This may be compared with the attitude implicit in Sat. 1. 10. 1-19. Horace there rejects the rough, unpolished writings of Lucilius, but 17 ff. show that he is no more favourably disposed to the kind of poetry which stands in complete opposition to archaic ruggedness, the delicate trifles composed in an artificial and excessively refined manner by those who took Calvus and Catullus as their models. His own position

will prune what is too luxuriant in growth³²); roughnesses he will smooth away; words lacking in effectiveness (*virtus*) he will root out. And during the carrying out of all these difficult tasks he will give the impression of being at play; he will be like a dancer who twists and contorts himself but gives the appearance of perfect ease.

That 109-25 form a kind of digression is clear from 126ff. where the theme of foolish self-satisfaction which had appeared in 106-8 returns. There, however, Horace had talked, using the third person, of bad poets who are satisfied with their own work; here he speaks, ironically of course, of himself:

*praetulerim scriptor delirus inersque videri,
dum mea delectent mala me vel denique fallant,
quam sapere et ringi* (126-8).

sapere, which is here used of knowledge of the art of poetry, looks back to the digression in 109-25. It is better for him to be like the bad poets of whom he has spoken — they are happy at least — than to know the requirements of his art and to be vexed by his inability to measure up to that standard which it is clear is the only one which will result in the *legitimum poema*.

There follows in 128 the beginning of yet another *αἴνος*, set this time in Greece³³). It tells of a man, sane and normal in every respect except that he used to sit in an empty theatre and think he was listening to *miros tragoedos*. At length his relations had him cured of his delusion. When he came to his

must lie between these two extremes: the technique of his poetry must be masterly, for there must be no roughness; it must also possess an element of lively humour (cf. 14 f.) which will distinguish it from the enervated work of 'Alexandrian' poets. It was to the classical genre of Old Comedy that Horace turned (16 f.) when he sought for works which illustrated the combination of forceful humour and technical excellence. To these two qualities in the satire correspond those of forcefulness (*vemens*) and purity (*purus*) of diction in the epistle.

32) Words possessing the metrical form of *luxuriantia* are extremely rare in Horace's hexameters. The word here illustrates the fault of which Horace speaks, Nilsson, op. cit. 84. For comparable devices in the epistle to the Pisones see Heinze ad Ars P. 17. 50. 211, J. Marouzeau, Rev. Phil. 50. 1926. 110 f., Humanités (Rev. d'Enseignement Secondaire et d'éducation) 11 (lettres). 1935. 146 f. (not accessible to me), Rev. Ét. Lat. 14. 1936. 58 ff., Récréation Latines (1940) 177 ff. (not accessible to me), N. I. Herescu, Rev. Ét. Lat. 24. 1946. 74 f.

33) Note the simple opening: *fuit haud ignobilis Argis, qui ...*; cf. Sat. 2. 3. 81 ff.: *libertinus erat, qui ...*

senses, he told them that they had been the death of him, because they had forcibly deprived him of *voluptas . . . et gratissima error* (138 ff.). So, we understand, it would be better for Horace to write bad poetry and delude himself about it than to come to his senses and essay the difficult task of composing good poetry.

The whole passage from 87 to 140 shows Horace discussing his position as poet with the greatest delicacy and irony. At first he seems to picture himself as one of Rome's self-important poets and to make no claim to be regarded as any better than they (87-101). Then his tone hardens. At 102 we sense an opposition between Horace and the mass of Rome's poets:

multa fero, ut placem genus irritabile vatum.

When he speaks in 106 of those *mala qui componunt carmina*, we carry over from 102 the idea that he stands opposed to those who are bad poets; consequently, when he speaks in 109 of the poet *qui legitimum cupiet fecisse poema*, contrasting him with bad poets, we cannot but identify this poet with Horace and regard 109-25 as a statement of his own poetic principles, comparable with certain theoretical discussions and declarations of policy which occur in the first book of the satires³⁴). In describing what is required of the good poet Horace implicitly puts before us the principles which he has tried to follow, but modestly does not make explicit their relevance to himself. The continuation is unpretentious (126 ff.). In saying that he could be happy writing bad poetry and that this is preferable to being worried through a realisation of the requirements of his art, Horace almost makes explicit the fact that the ideals of 109 ff. are those which have inspired him. *ringi*, however, is meant to indicate that he was not satisfied with his attempts to write in accordance with those ideals; furthermore, Horace here *rejects* the idea of a life devoted to the highest standards in poetry. The self-depreciation which is so marked in this passage receives further expression in the *αἴνος* of 128 ff. Yet in spite of the way in which he plays down the ideals which must inspire the true poet, the most important element in the first 140 lines is 109—25. Those ideals are uncomfortable, and he

34) Sat. 1. 4. 39 ff., 10. 7 ff.

laughingly says that he would be happier without them. We know, however, that it is in accordance with them that he has written and that it is they which distinguish him from the many poetasters among his contemporaries.

In the explanations which Horace has so far put forward (with the exception, perhaps, of that given in 55-7) there has been present, in varying degrees, an element of irony and an absence of complete seriousness. The concluding portion of the epistle places before us a reason for abandoning the writing of *carmina* which he intends us to take seriously. He is more interested now in living a good life than in the composition of lyrics:

*nimirum sapere est abiectis utile nugis,
et tempestivum pueris concedere ludum,
ac non verba sequi fidibus modulanda Latinis,
sed verae numerosque modosque ediscere vitae* (141-4).

In 142 Horace makes a momentary reference to his advancing years, a topic which we met in 55-7 and which is to assume some prominence in the concluding lines of the epistle. Knoche has shown how the reader, coming to *sapere* after reading the αἰνός about the madman of Argos, will be inclined to take it in its "medical", instead of its "philosophical" sense, and how this smoothes the transition to philosophic matters³⁵.

The epistle is now concluded by a lengthy moral meditation (145-216), introduced by the words:

quocirca mecum loquor haec tacitusque recordor (145).

I shall not follow in detail the line of thought which is present in Horace's treatment of the first two topics in this meditation (146-79), but shall content myself with discussing the transitions at 157/8 and 179/80. As happens frequently in the rest of the epistle, these transitions are made smooth by the occurrence of closely related elements towards the conclusion of one section and near the beginning of that which follows. In the last sentence of the first part of the meditation (146-57) we have the words *divitiae* (155) and *avarior* (157); the idea of ownership and acquisition suggested in that sentence recurs in the first line of the next section:

si proprium est, quod quis libra mercatus et aere est (158).

35) Knoche, op. cit. 478 f.

There is, furthermore, a formal connection. A characteristic of the first section is the extensive use which Horace makes in it of conditional sentences. The fact that the section which follows begins with a *si*-clause makes the transition smooth, for the reader tends to assimilate the new sentence to those which he has already read³⁶).

At the end of the second section Horace lists a number of kinds of property:

*quid vici prosunt aut horrea? quidve Calabris
saltibus adiecti Lucani, si metit Orcus
grandia cum parvis, non exorabilis auro (177 ff.)?*

The following sentence, which is in fact the first of the next section, begins with a long list of precious objects (180 f.). This will lead the reader to suppose that it is parallel to that which precedes. There Horace refers to the impermanence of landed possessions; it seems that in the sentence which follows he is going to say that ownership of precious stones and similar valuable objects cannot be lasting either. Only at 182, which is the third line of the section, do we realise that we have left the subject of the impermanence of possessions and have passed on to a new topic.

This is the diversity of men's attitudes towards the acquisition of property. Horace now speaks of two brothers: one prefers to live an easy, indolent life, while the other works unceasingly at reclaiming land from the forest; the Genius, of which we are given an interesting description in 187-9, knows why this is so. With *utar*, placed emphatically at the beginning of 190, Horace brings himself, in contrast with other men, to our attention. *His* aim is to keep to the *via media: ex modico... acervo* (190);... *scire volam, quantum simplex hilarisque nepoti discrepet et quantum discordet parcus avaro* (193 f.). Didactically he drives home this point and puts forward the ideal of the school-boy enjoying his brief holiday as that which should govern the living of our lives (196 f.). He prays for the absence of *pauperies immunda* from his home. Then with an emphatic *ego* he declares, using a nautical metaphor, that he himself will always be the same, whatever his external circumstances may be. The idea of the *via media* is then expressed in terms of

36) This is so, even though the mood of the verbs in the preceding protases is subjunctive, whereas in 158 we have *si proprium est*.

sailing (201 f.), and this is followed by a general statement of his position

extremi primorum, extremis usque priores (204)³⁷.

Horace has decided that he is free from *avaritia*, but is he free from all faults? He considers this point in 206 ff., addressing a series of questions to himself. In 211 he speaks once more of the approach of old age, preparing us for the idea that is to dominate the conclusion of the epistle:

lenior et melior fis accedente senecta?

There follows a final question which, unlike those in 206-11, is of a general nature:

quid te exempta levat spinis de pluribus una?

Then the form of expression changes:

vivere si recte nescis, decede peritis (213).

Klingner has shown that the words, *vivere... recte*, taken in a philosophic sense, look back to the moralising which has preceded them, but that they possess another meaning also which prepares us for Horace's speaking of a life of pleasure in the next line³⁸). Here in words that recall to our minds both 142 and 55 ff. he says:

lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti.

He must leave to a younger generation the life from which lyric poetry springs. If he does not and these young people find him *potum largius aequo* (does Horace perhaps imagine himself drinking to restore his flagging poetic powers?)³⁹), they will laugh at him and drive him from their world (215 f.), the world, as he says in 56, of *iocos, venerem, convivia, ludum*.

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37) Cf. Epist. 1. 2. 71.

38) Klingner, op. cit. 467 f.

39) Cf. Epist. 1. 19. 1 ff.