

HORACE *Carmina*, III. XI. 17-20

Some 140 years ago Hofman Peerlkamp astonished the sages of Europe by publishing an edition of the *Odes* in which he identified interpolation in more than half the poems and condemned as spurious nearly 700 verses. Ironically it is probable that the violence of his assault in the end only strengthened the established text by rallying to its defence many critics who might otherwise have been inclined to question the tradition. From the high-water mark represented by Peerlkamp's edition the tide of interpolation theory could only recede, and now we are left with a text which is almost as free from recommended deletions as the Aldine. Apart from the special case of 4.8, where those who suspect interpolation cannot agree about the verses to be deleted, there is but one passage in the *Odes* where the reader is still commonly warned that the lines on the printed page may not be authentic:

Cerberus, quamvis furiale centum
muniant angues caput eius atque
spiritus taeter saniesque manet
ore trilingui.

It may be helpful here to rehearse the treatment given to this stanza in five of the most popular editions:

(1) *Budé* (Villeneuve, 1946); (2) Kiessling-Heinze (1930); (3) *Oxford Classical Texts* (Wickham-Garrod, 1912); (4) *Paravia* (Lenchantin de Gubernatis-Bo, 1957); (5) *Teubner* (Klingner, 1959).

(1) *Budé*: uu. 17-20 *seclus. multi praeunte Buttmann.* || 18 eius atque *codd. omn.*: exeatque Bentley; et sunt qui uers. *carm.* 4, 8, 18, ubi eius iterum inuenitur, Horatio abiudicent. Hic tamen si strophæ cetera parum felicem receperis, noli quicquam mutare || 19 taeter γ teter [tecer E] M *rell.*

(2) Kiessling-Heinze prints the stanza in square brackets; there is no apparatus but the arguments for interpolation are given in the notes.

(3) *O.C.T.*: 17–20 *damnat commentatorum pars maior* 18 *exeatque Bentley; effluatque Gesner*

(4) *Paravia* (the stanza is printed in square brackets): *vv.* 17–20 *habent codd., Pph. Acr., ab Horatio abiudicandos Buttman censuit eiusque sententiam multi amplexi sunt* 18 *eius atque exeatque Bentley, aestus atque Döring, illi et usque Io. von Gott Fröblich, ardeatque Peerlkamp, emicetque Unger.*

(5) *Teubner* (the stanza is printed in square brackets): 17–20 *habent ΞΨ Pph. σχ ΑΓ, damnaverunt post Buttmannum multi; cf. Naeke opusc. 1, 74 Heinze ad l. || eius atque] exeatque Btl.*

We may begin an examination of the critics' reasons for doubting the genuineness of the Cerberus stanza by consulting the most useful of modern commentators – Richard Heinze. His note on 17–20 begins: “Die Unechtheit der Strophe hat Naeke (opusc. I 74 sq.) erwiesen, u. a. Kiessling mit richtigem Gefühl vertreten. Die Schilderung von Cerberus' scheußlichem Aussehen könnte wohl den Mut des Orpheus preisen, ist aber als Gegensatz zu *cessit* bedeutungslos, bringt nur einen häßlichen Mißklang in den hochgestimmten Lobpreis der Laute und lockert den Anschluß von *quin et ... risit an cessit tibi blandienti.*” He continues with specific objections to *caput, trilingui ore, angues, furiale, centum, muniunt, eius, atque, taeter*, and dismisses the whole stanza as a gloss on *inmanis ianitor aulae*. After reading Heinze's note the student might be forgiven for supposing that the spuriousness of the whole stanza was an established fact, though he might still wonder at the extraordinary good fortune of an interpolator who, in spite of his monstrous ineptitude, had succeeded in foisting his own bad Latin and worse taste upon an author as refined as he was widely studied.

But Heinze's objections do not survive close scrutiny; they are individually weak and collectively ineffectual. It would be tedious to examine them at length and a series of brief rebuttals must suffice. For the moment I leave aside Naeke's so-called proof and refer in what follows only to Heinze's note. The repulsive appearance of Cerberus is not designed to draw attention to the courage of Orpheus, which would indeed be irrelevant, but it does form an effective contrast to *cessit*: the yielding of the horrible hobgoblin, in spite of his forbidding and poisonous armoury, demonstrates that the lyre can control any creature, however savage. The harsh disharmony of the description is as

appropriate to the subject as, for example, the sibilant lines on dropsy (c. 2.2.13-16). A closer connection between *quin et ... risit* and *cessit tibi blandienti* is not required because the text as it stands provides a balancing pair of pictures illustrating the irresistible power of music to convert feelings into their opposites – wildness made tame (15-20) and pain turned into pleasure (21-4). There is no reason to infer from the singular *caput* that the writer conceived of a one-headed Cerberus any more than Horace imagined Lydia's lover to possess one tooth or Anacreon's lyre one string (c. 1. 13, 12, 17, 18). By *trilingui ore* the writer meant the same as Horace meant at c. 2. 19, 31. It is capricious to assert that the snakes are described as growing on the head(s); what the writer is referring to is the monster's mane, which is commonly thus pictured by the poets (e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 6.419, Tib. 1.3.71, Ov. *Her.* 9.94). The similarities between the description given here and that in c. 2.13 are as much an argument for Horace, who frequently repeats himself with or without variation, as for an interpolator. The word *muniant* is admirably apt: the mane encircles the head as *moenia* surround a city and the snakes are erected in defence just as the hair stands up on the neck of an angry dog. If *is* is not to be found elsewhere in the *Epodes* or *Odes* 1-3, that fact does not in itself prove that *eius* here is not authentic (of the real problem presented by *eius* I shall have more to say later). Between the use of *atque* at the end of the line here and in c. 2.10.21 there is very little to choose, though in the latter case it serves to link a pair and here it contributes to an accumulation which is completed by the *-que*. Finally comes the comment on *taeter*, which deserves special attention because it provides a salutary example of the fate which can befall even a fine scholar when he is determined to "prove" a speculative theory. Heinze wrote: "Das krasse Wort *taeter* begegnet in der augusteischen Poesie sonst nur ein paar-mal bei Virgil in späten Büchern der Aeneis". This statement appears to carry a number of surprising implications, of which I shall specify three: (1) that round the Augustan poets was a kind of sanitary cordon excluding all "krasse Wörter"; (2) that we know which is the correct theory of the order in which the sections of the Aeneid were composed; (3) that Virgil, as he approached the end of his masterpiece, was losing his poetic judgment and in using a word like *taeter* (*Aen.* 3. 228, 10.727) he revealed that his sensitivity in his own language fell short of the standards recognised by modern scholiasts. To believe even

one of these things is difficult; to believe all of them is virtually impossible.

Heinze based his criticism of the stanza on the arguments of Naeke and we should now look at these. Naeke's lecture of 14 August 1821 is still well worth reading for its merits as well as its faults¹). He begins by mentioning three details to which objections had been raised by earlier critics: the use of *eius* (Bentley); the zeugma of *spiritus* and *sanies* (Bentley); the use of *atque* at the end of the line (Bothe). Concerning *eius* Naeke has only this to say: "post ea, quae a Bentleio disputata sunt, nemo facile nunc est qui ferri posse ullo modo censeat". About the problem of *spiritus* ... *manet* he merely expresses uncertainty. In the case of *atque* he first criticizes Bothe's objections to it in *c.* 2.10.21 and then justifies his condemnation of it in *c.* 3.11.18, asserting that there is a distinction between the language allowed in a humble conversational poem like 2.10 and that which is acceptable in an elevated one like 3.11. But the end of a sapphic line is not a particularly significant position, as the frequency of final *et* indicates, which throws grave doubt on the claim that *atque* in that place is an example of *sermo familiaris*. Even if it were shown to be so (and to do this we should perhaps need more comparative lyric material than ever existed in Latin), how can a critic safely say *non licet* of this collocation in an exalted poem? Horace's odes vary in style not only from ode to ode but also within odes from sentence to sentence; it is one of his most delightful characteristics that he can be nobly Pindaric and bluntly colloquial in successive breaths.

After dealing summarily with the three defects mentioned, which he regards as too grave to be cured by emendation, Naeke adds: "Quid enim? Praeter illa, quae vituperari, ac recte quidem vidimus, num sana sunt omnia? num elegantia? num Horatio digna?" He emerges in fact as a member of that large band of critics who have believed that the soundness of a passage should be judged by the twin criteria of elegance and worthiness. In this kind of approach important questions are begged: whether the critic's notions of what is *elegans* and *dignum* coincide with the feelings of the author; whether the author's prime concern at that particular point was to be elegant; whether he wished – or was able – to be worthy of himself. But Naeke makes it plain

1) A. F. Naeke, *Opuscula Philologica* I, 73–8. I am indebted to Prof. Dr. C. J. Classen for providing me with a copy of this rare piece.

that he has no reservations about his own ability to determine what was *veteribus pulcrum* or about the need to purge Horace of his faults. He next advances two special objections – to *furiale caput* and to the whole *quamvis* clause. He suggests that nobody can explain how the head of Cerberus can be described as *furiale*. This is false; both the common explanations (*f.* = *instar Furiarum* or *furibundum*) are perfectly acceptable. What is true is that many commentators have not thought it necessary to explain the obvious. The *quamvis* clause is objectionable, says Naeke, because these details of Cerberus' dangerous armoury would have been appropriate to a description of his encounter with the violent Hercules but are out of place in the Orpheus story, where he yields tamely to coaxing. "In qua descriptione addere, factum id esse, *quamvis* centum angues *muniant* caput Cerberi, *quamvis* spiritus teter saniesque exeant ex ore eius, ineptum est, quum horum munimentorum, quantumvis terribilium, contra artis musicae delenimenta usus sit nullus". If anyone asks how the passage should have been written, Naeke can tell them what Horace himself would have written (and indeed did write in two other places – *c.* 2.13.33-5 and 19.29-32): he would have described a Cerberus whose snakes had already been soothed and who had stopped foaming at the mouth. This is a splendidly Bentleian argument, though it is not in fact Bentley's! Never for a moment does it appear to have occurred to Naeke that, quite apart from the literary convention of variation, Horace might have had different purposes in mind in different contexts; that a complimentary description of Cerberus fawning on Bacchus might not be entirely suitable for a place where the poet wished to scare the wits out of a young girl. Naeke's conclusion – arrived at by one of the most spectacular leaps in Horatian criticism – is: "Spurii sunt quatuor, quibus Cerberi descriptio continetur, versus: eximendi ex Horatio, adscribendi tenebrioni suo, qui tam incondito verborum strepitu ausus est cum elegantissimis Horatii modis contendere".

Naeke goes on to give his listeners some admirable advice: "Quod autem non immerito exspectari solet, si quis scriptoris alicuius locum alieno additamento interpolatum esse demonstrare velit, ut is et causam interpolandi probabili modo demonstrat et suis se prodere eum, qui interpolaverit, indicium ostendat." Unfortunately his own practice is not as unexceptionable as his principles. His explanation of the *causa interpolandi* is as follows. The topic of Cerberus was *tritissimum* and nothing could be

imagined better fitted to excite "infimorum ingeniorum libidinem et scribendi cupiditatem". Horace himself unwittingly gave the mischief-maker his chance by ending a stanza with *inmanis ianitor aulae*. "Quid proclivius erat, quam addita strophæ hanc, quæ videbatur esse, obscuritatem tollere, Cerberi nomen ponere, et notissimi monstri foeditatem luminibus poeticis illustrare?"

The *causa* can have validity only if the *indicia* are conclusive. If the *indicia* fail, as I suggest Næke's plainly do, then the presence of the passage must be explained in Horatian terms, which are likely to be very different from an interpolator's. Horace was not deterred from writing on familiar subjects, however trite; on the other hand, he would not have added a stanza merely to explain *ianitor* to the ignorant, and it must be shown to serve a higher purpose in the poem as a whole. Interpretations of a suspect passage will tend to divide according to the presuppositions of the interpreters, and Næke provides an additional example of this tendency by his comments on the details of Cerberus' appearance. Because the writer was an interpolator, says Næke, the reference to *centum angues* must spring from his misunderstanding of Horace's *belua centiceps* in *c.* 2.13.34 and his use of *furiale* stems from his mixing up the snakes of the Eumenides with the mane of Cerberus in that well-known description. But those who believe that Horace was the writer will make other suppositions, whether they hold that Horace varied his descriptions of Cerberus or was consistent (it is really immaterial to our present inquiry, but I myself think that in all his references – including the suspected one – Horace imagines a Cerberus with three mouths and a snaky mane – the conventional breed of hell-hound). The two types of interpreter, conservative and interpolationist, approach the same evidence in different ways; they argue in a somewhat circular manner and come no closer to proof, though they may reinforce a conviction founded on faith.

The remarks of Næke arouse some respect as well as amusement, but those of his successor, Buttmann, do neither. I mention Buttmann only because to him is frequently attributed the honour – if such it be – of first detecting the interpolator of the Cerberus stanza²). In an essay entitled "Horaz und Nicht-

2) Cf. the *Budé*, *Paravia*, and *Teubner* editions quoted earlier.

Horaz" 3) Buttmann claims that *c.* 1.2.9-12 is an interpolation. He wastes no time in attempting to identify *causa et indicia interpolandi*, as Naeke had recommended. His only concern is to anticipate surprise at the suggestion that the text of so popular an author should have been contaminated by additions, and in brief his argument is simply this: if there are five interpolations in the *Odes*, why should there not be a sixth? 4) One of the five supposedly counterfeit passages which he uses to support his new-found forgery is the Cerberus stanza; as proof that it is an interpolation he deems a reference to Naeke's treatment sufficient, though he adds some expressions of disgust "mit dem unpoetischen nicht nur, sondern auch unrednerischen, ja kaum lateinischen *ejus*". This emphasis on the word *eius* is at least useful, for it sends us back to Dacier and Bentley, with whom the trouble started.

It is a relief to turn from the nineteenth century apostles of "Feinfühligkeit" to the critics of an earlier age. Not only were Dacier and Bentley in their way greater scholars; they also were more modest and more respectful of the tradition. Bentley's edition of Horace, which appeared in 1711, forms one of his main claims to lasting fame, but what must surprise anyone who reads it is the fact that in his text he is – apart from numerous orthographical improvements – remarkably conservative (I use the word in its best and laudatory sense). Most of the bold suggestions which are quoted by later critics are to be found in the notes, which contain a good many *jeux d'esprit* as well as exuberant learning and powerful arguments. Bentley printed the traditional text of the Cerberus stanza without alteration or signal of suspicion. His lengthy note on l.18 begins: "Nihil verius, quam quod Dacierius libere & candide hic adnotavit; *Totum*, inquit, *hoc Carmen debonestat vocula EIUS, qua utinam Horatius non usus fuisset*. Equidem jamdudum male oderam illud *ejus*, & hanc viri insignis censuram magna cum voluptate postea legi." A review of comparable passages (including a justification of *c.* 4.8.18, which many later critics have wished to expunge) leads Bentley to the conclusion that the *eius* here is superfluous and prosaic (no nonsense here about an "unrednerisches, kaum lateinisches *eius*"). Even less does Bentley like the *atque*

3) *Mythologus* II, 364-70.

4) The other five are: 3. 4. 69-72, 3. 11. 17-20, 3. 17. 2-5, 4. 4. 18-22, 4. 8. 17.

which immediately follows and he objects on the ground of sense to the notion of *spiritus ... manet*. In dealing with the last point Bentley reveals his chief fault, a kind of procrustean logic, which is often so entertainingly persuasive that one almost wishes he could have been at the poet's elbow to advise him to write something other than that which he did write. In this case since *manet* does not, in Bentley's view, suit *spiritus*, Bentley is ready to supply a verb which does suit and with one master-stroke to get rid of bad *eius* and worse *atque*. As Faunus or Apollo saved Horace from the falling tree Bentley now saves him from the sacrificial knife with his brilliant *exeatque*. For a time the traditional text could breathe again, though wheezily, only to succumb a century later to the pitiless butchery of Naeke and his followers. Bentley's emendation certainly deserves to be remembered and it has earned its place in most apparatuses.

But where in all this is Dacier, the original villain of the piece? Bentley quoted Dacier and scores of critics have quoted Bentley, but very few have bothered to note what Dacier had to say about Bentley's solution. In his revised edition of 1727 Dacier wrote: "Ce seul mot *ejus* déshonore l'Ode, et je voudrois bien qu' Horace ne s'en fût pas servi. M. Bentlei qui en a été choqué comme moi voiloit corriger *Muniant* caput *exeatque* *Halitus* teter ce que je ne scaurois approuver. Il faut laisser les anciens avec leurs fautes: *Exeat* est encore pis."⁵⁾

It seems that the single word *eius* is at the centre of the problem. It is perhaps the last word which would be suspected by a class of students who had been invited to find fault with the stanza. It is a common and ordinary word and that is indeed the trouble: it is too ordinary; it is prosaic. But is it so prosaic that it could not appear in poetry, or at any rate in Horace's lyric poetry? In this connection it is usual to refer to Axelson's *Unpoetische Wörter*, an interesting essay on a difficult subject which is by its nature full of uncertainties and guesswork⁶⁾. On p. 72 he gives a table of the use of genitive forms of *is*, *hic*, *ille*, and *iste* in eleven poets from Lucretius to Juvenal. His conclusion from statistical analysis is: "So viel dürfte ohne weiteres aus den

5) It will be noted that Dacier quotes the lines with Bentley's substitution of *halitus* for *spiritus*. It is clear from the way he proposes this improvement that Bentley himself had no confidence in it: "Quare ad evitandum Ambiguum, utinam Noster scripsisset potius, *Exeatque Halitus teter*."

6) *Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund, Skrifter* 29 (1945).

Zahlen erhellen, daß der strenge poetische Stil nicht nur *is*, sondern auch *hic ille iste* in den Genetivformen tunlichst aus dem Wege geht – offenbar weil diese Formen, ganz besonders im Plural, als lästige Prosaismen empfunden wurden⁷⁾. It is worth setting out a portion of the table, particularly as Axelson's work is not widely accessible.

	Gen. Sing. von				Summe
	<i>is</i>	<i>hic</i>	<i>ille</i>	<i>iste</i>	
Lucr.	35	1	17	–	53
Hor. hexam.	2	2	8	–	12
Hor. lyr.	1	–	1	–	2
Verg.	–	7	8	1	16
Tib.	1	–	7	–	8
Prop.	2	1	2	–	5
Ov. eleg.	2	50	20	1	73
Ov. met.	1	31	20	–	52

	Gen. Plur. von				Summe
	<i>is</i>	<i>hic</i>	<i>ille</i>	<i>iste</i>	
Lucr.	34	12	7	–	53
Hor. hexam.	2	9	2	–	13
Hor. lyr.	–	1	–	–	1
Verg.	–	8	2	–	10
Tib.	–	–	–	–	–
Prop.	–	2	3	–	5
Ov. eleg.	–	8	2	–	10
Ov. met.	–	7	–	–	7

From these figures some interesting facts emerge. To my mind the two most significant are that, apart from certain peculiar licences exhibited by Lucretius and Ovid, the poets of this period were chary of using the genitive forms, and that they did nevertheless use most of those forms occasionally. The persistent efforts of critics have failed to eliminate all examples even "in der feineren Dichtung", though we may note in passing that Axelson does not bother to include the *eius* of c. 3.11.18 because he assumes that the whole stanza has been proved spurious. Where emendation or interpolation theory fail or are manifestly out of the question commentators have to resort to the excuse that the poet was too young to know or too old to remember what was *dignum sui*⁷⁾.

7) A signal example of this absurdity is offered by Axelson on p. 74: "Daß Vergils acht *horum* (oder *harum*) mit einer Ausnahme auf späte Bücher der Aeneis entfallen (4, 608; 7, 94; 11, 76, 319, 361. 12, 273, 490,

It must be plainly said that rarity of usage signifies a warning to the textual critic, not a command; it provides no infallible guide; it proves nothing. As an illustration one might take the case of *illius* and ask what conclusion may be drawn from the fact that this form does not occur in the *Epodes* or the first three books of the *Odes*. That Horace chose to avoid *illius* in lyric and that any example which appears in his later work must be a corruption or reveal the hand of a *tenebrius*? Or that *quid habes illius, illius|quae spirabat amores* (c. 4.13.18-19) is but the maundering of a senile poet who has lost all sense of self-respect? There is one valid conclusion: that when Horace finally does use *illius* the word has much greater force than it would have in rhetorical prose, where it would indeed be an ordinary word. Rarity imparts emphasis and converts weakness into strength. In the Cerberus stanza rarity underlines the *eius* and transmutes a pronoun of casual reference into one of deictic force – to achieve an effect which I shall consider later.

So far, with the important exception of Dacier, little has been said about *commentatorum pars minor*, those who have accepted the *eius* and defended the stanza as a whole. In 1869 K. Lehrs might remark that the interpolation theory was “bekanntlich allgemeines Urtheil bedeutender Männer”, but in fact there have always been some “bedeutende Männer” who have refused to be cowed by the contemptuous language of the interpolationists. O. Keller in his edition of 1879, after listing 22 scholars who had condemned the stanza, ranges himself on the opposing side with “Orelli, Obbarius, J. Ch. Jahn, Eckstein, usw.” and refers the reader to Orelli’s *excursus*. The *excursus* is indeed an ornament of Orelli’s splendid and still valuable edition; it consists mainly of the sane comments of Jahn⁸). In the post-Heinze era the interpolationists have been attacked with vigour, even violence, by Dornseiff⁹). But his primary purpose in a short paper entitled “Die römischen Dichter heillos interpoliert?” was to pour scorn on Jachmann and Knoche with particular

853), ist sicherlich kein Zufall, auch nicht, daß von seinen zwei Belegen für *illorum* – eine im ganzen großen corpus Ovidianum nur durch am. 3, 3, 47 und Pont. 4, 6, 43 zu belegende Form! – der eine ebenfalls der zweiten Hälfte der *Aeneis* (7, 282), der andere den *Bucolica* (7, 17) angehört.”

8) Future editors of Horace would do well to take this phrase of Jahn’s as a motto: “vereor tamen, ne hac vel alia correctione Horatium potius quam librarios emendemus.”

9) *Hermes* 71, 1936, 458-65.

reference to interpolation in Propertius, and he was content to dismiss Naeke's contribution as "Beckmesserei" without bothering to expose the essential worthlessness of Naeke's influential arguments. More recently K. Barwick advanced a positive argument in favour of the Cerberus stanza by claiming that its removal spoils the pattern of construction, which he saw as $3 + 3 + 3 + 4^{10}$. Unfortunately Barwick does not appear to have been able to fulfil his intention to expound at greater length the case for regarding the suspect passage as genuine. The interpolationists still seem to hold the field, though a hopeful sign for the re-establishment of the traditional text is provided by G. Williams in *The Third Book of Horace's Odes* (Oxford, 1969). He points out the weakness of the objections to *eius*, adduces Virgilian and Horatian parallels for the use of a proper name with an expansive description, and identifies a more satisfactory pattern in the original form of the ode.

It is not enough to suggest, as I have done, that the arguments of the interpolationists are poor and frequently ridiculous. The poetry is not necessarily good because the criticism is bad. If the stanza is genuine, a serious attempt must be made to explain what Horace meant by it.

One remarkable aspect of the criticism of the Cerberus stanza is that scholars have rarely attempted to view it in relation to the poem as a whole. If they lift their eyes from *eius*, it is only to move on to the next word – and then to the next. If they do relate the stanza to the whole ode, it is only to work out "blocks" and balancing numerical groups. The strong and quickly shifting emotional currents of the poem are ignored and it is seen primarily as a piece of legend prettily retold.

I hope to comment at length elsewhere on the whole poem and here I shall merely summarize my view of the function of the fifth stanza. Horace is casting a musical spell upon Lyde: she is his prime listener and the wider audience of Horace's readers is expected to be conscious of her presence throughout the ode and in imagination to observe its effect upon her. At the beginning Horace uses all the seductive sweetness of his lyre to capture Lyde's notice, and then very swiftly he leads her, as it were, into the underworld to confront her unexpectedly with the appalling image of Cerberus, which is to shock the thoughtless girl into a state of rapt attention so that she will listen obediently to the

10) *RbM* 93 (1950), 249-67.

message which follows – *audiat Lyde* ... This is why, even under Orphic influence, Cerberus is described as no tail-wagging housedog with slumbering snakes and politely closed mouths (*pace* Naeke) but as a *monstrum taeterrimum*. If the description is inelegant, it is meant to be; the words fit their subject and serve the poet's aim, which is to frighten the spellbound victim.

So much for the stanza as a whole. But is *eius* tolerable? I have already suggested that, because it is unusual, *eius* acquires some demonstrative force. It serves, in fact, as the third element in a rhetorical group of three – *ianitor* ... *Cerberus* ... *eius*. Three times Horace points his finger at the creature which he wants Lyde to see in her mind's eye. The use of the tricolon in rhetoric is too common to need illustration, and that is only one aspect of a common tendency among prose writers and poets to work with sets of three. It is observable that Horace frequently uses triple combinations in the *Odes* in a variety of ways. For example, in 2.16.33–6 he repeats a single pronoun (*te* ... *tibi* ... *te*); in 3.29.49–52 he piles up epithets (*laeta* ... *pertinax* ... *benigna*); in 4.7.23–4 he achieves the seemingly impossible and produces a treble triplet (*non, Torquate, genus, non te facundia, non te | restituet pietas*). With Cerberus the triple effect works also in another way from the one I have mentioned: around the name there is built up a three-fold accumulation of images – (1) *immanis ianitor aulae*; (2) *furiale centum | munit angues caput eius*; (3) *spiritus taeter saniesque manet | ore trilingui*. The three layers are separated by the *quamvis* and the *atque*. Here I see a plain justification for the suspect *atque*, which may be a weak link but is certainly an effective separator. The three-tiered description of the three-headed hound of Hell starts solemnly in the first stage, becomes fearful in the second, and reaches a revolting climax in the third. The craftsman who fashioned these lines seems a worthy rival to the author of another famous and carefully-worked account of Cerberus – *Aen.* 6.417ff. It has, however, been objected that while Virgil's Cerberus barks with sonorous dignity, the stray dog of the Hypermetra ode makes noises quite unsuitable to fine poetry. We must now consider this point.

Cerberus is not a beautiful object and there is no reason why the words which picture him should be lovely – quite the contrary. Harshness is appropriate and contributes to the awful effect, but nobody seems to have tried to determine what the nature of this harshness is. There is one element in particular which has not, I think, been noticed, and that is the presence of

an unusually large number of labio-velars. I calculate that the incidence of labio-velars in Horatian sapphics averages under one and a half per stanza. This stanza is the only one which has five (in the *Odes* there is only one other stanza which has as many as four – 1.12.13-16 – though there are three such in the *carmen saeculare*). Again in the matter of *u* sounds, though here the stanza is not unique, it is rivalled by only eight other stanzas. In frequency of sibilants the Cerberus stanza does not at first sight appear to be exceptional, but in fact the combination of four words ending in *s* in the first two lines with two words beginning and ending in *s* in the third produces a distinctly hissing effect. Sibilant effects accompanying the mention of snakes are to be found in most of the Latin poets and the device is too common to need illustration. It is possible that we have here a supporting reason for the choice of *eius* (just as *atque* carried the additional advantage of a labio-velar). As for the name of Cerberus itself it has often been remarked that it “growls”; it is not too fanciful to hear a corresponding growl in *ore trilingui*. It may seem to be going too far to claim that in the space of four lines Cerberus growls, snarls, barks, and hisses, but it cannot be denied that the sound effects are extraordinarily fitting. Horace was a master of expressiveness of all kinds and here he has excelled himself – or been excelled? Doubtless the interpolationists will cry: *ampullatur in arte*.

I have argued in this paper that there are no grounds for rejecting the Cerberus stanza and good grounds for considering it to be genuine. I should perhaps explain that I came to these conclusions having started out like many another with the conventional view that the stanza was an undoubted interpolation. Finding Heinze's objections unsatisfactory I set out to find more detailed and more certain proof and encountered only a series of mirages. Returning from the desert, I have found a much better and more interesting poem in my hands than I had seen before. I am pleased and relieved but also angry with the critics who led me so unnecessarily astray. There is an important point here. As our texts improve – as on the whole they do from generation to generation – we come closer to the limits of certainty imposed by a defective transmission. One of the chief remaining sources of interference between ourselves and the ancient authors are the critical myths which have been imported into the text by our predecessors – well-meaning but sometimes rash and arrogant men. The critic who fails to emend correctly a manifest corrup-

tion may be readily excused, though the error may have unfortunate effects if it becomes so embedded in the text that nobody questions it; but the man who attempts to expunge authentic words which the acid of time has failed to corrode commits an offence which cannot be condoned. To the ejector of the Cerberus stanza may be re-addressed Naeke's words: "Itaque abeat fatalis bestia, facessat hinc et in tenebricosa scholasticorum officina, unde male emersum purissimi poetae librum obsedit, monstruosum caput condat."

It is to be hoped that future editors of Horace will print c. 3.11.17-20 without taint and with an apparatus free of the absurdities which disfigure texts to-day. Possibly Bentley's *exeatque* is the one suggestion which deserves to be preserved - if only as a curious monument to a regrettable episode.

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