MORE VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY AUGUSTUS

JOHN J. H. SAVAGE

Fordham University

It would be well at this stage to disentangle some of the threads which I have detected in Augustan poetry that betray a conscious attempt at variation on the theme of the favorite motto of Augustus. More influences of this topic have come to my attention since my first paper on this subject was written. These new instances have helped to confirm my thesis that the paradoxical *speude bradeôs*, assigned to Augustus by Suetonius as the predominant motif in his life and action (*crebro iactabat*, Suet. *Aug.* 25.4), did undoubtedly appear in various guises in contemporary poetry. In this respect Vergil served as pioneer.[1]

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The author of the third pastoral, by his indirect approval of this adage of the youthful Octavian, led the way to the introduction by the "Court Poets" of several mutations of that topos in verses which served as complimentary expressions generally of good will towards the Princeps. Admiration for Vergil's clever adaptations of the Augustan paradox won over Horace to insert the theme in several of his *Odes* for the edification of his chief patron.

Ovid in a less serious vein played with this subject. His intention was to incite laughter rather than seek the approval of the propagator of this prosaic recommendation that one should act discreetly in the affairs of life without resort to recklessness. Ovid when conscious of the imperial apothegm tried in his mythical analogues to keep a safe stance between good humor and ridicule. Even in the elegy written

---

[1] The following articles are cited with abbreviations as indicated: "The Art of the Third Eclogue of Vergil," *TAPA* 89 (1958) 142–58 (*Art III*); "The Wine of Maron," *TAPA* 96 (1965) 375–401 (*Maron*); "Variations on a Theme by Augustus," *TAPA* 97 (1966) 431–57 (*Variations I*).

before leaving Rome for his loathed place of exile (*Tristia* 1.3) he played with the familiar topic apparently without much malice.[2]

Since the approved version of the Augustan maxim as presented in Vergil's third pastoral became the *fons et origo* of attempted later variations on the theme, it is well to repeat here the situation in the prototype. Damoetas, welcoming the appearance of a neighbor named Palaemon to act as judge in a proposed song contest between him and Menalcas (Vergil), flatters him in this way (52–53): "in me mora non erit ulla, / nec quemquam fugio."[3]   The word *mora* and its verb form *moror* are found to have become stereotyped in many of the "variations" recorded in my first paper. This is true of some of the instances brought forward now.   The phrase *nec fugio* is a negative rendition of *festina*, as *mora non erit* is of *lente*.

Vergil's mutations of the familiar topic were intended to convey to the eyes and ears of his principal reader pleasing and flattering references either to his personality as heir of the Julian line or to current or past events which stem from such a heritage, wherein the actual is often commingled with the mythical.   In the third pastoral, certain results of the attempt of Sextus Pompeius to shut off supplies during the years 39–38 from entering the Italian harbors are outlined in the poet's choice of Palaemon-Portunus as a dramatic representative of Octavian.[4]   This attempt at interweaving myth and reality was extended by the poet to his depiction of the character of his epic hero.   Vergil was faced with a difficult problem—how to convey this attempted correlation without sacrificing his artistic sense of the proper (*to prepon*).   Hence his more or less successful variations of the noted ruling principle of Augustus.

EPILOGUE AND EPITAPH

The Georgian epilogue (4.559–66) presents a diptych in which the active career of Augustus in his triumphal march after the battle of Actium to

---

[2] There are several recurrences of the theme here.   The most pertinent, perhaps, recounts part of the debate of the poet with himself as he leaves Rome (61–62):
> denique "quid propero ?   Scythia est, quo mittimur," inquam,
>   "Roma relinquenda est.   utraque iusta mora est."
We shall have to reserve for another occasion the topic of Ovid's generally humorous or ironic attitude to a subject that was taken seriously, for the most part, by his contemporaries or predecessors.

[3] See *Art III* 153–55.

[4] See *Art III* 153–55.

the "deep Euphrates" is contrasted with the poet's life of "inglorious ease" as "he dallied with shepherds' songs" (Fairclough):

> illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
> Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis oti,
> carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuventa,
> Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

If we accept this interpretation of this important colophon with its unique insertion of the poet's *nomen*, it may not seem out of place to set this epilogue beside his famous epitaph, composed, according to some compilers of his *vita*, by the poet himself, perhaps during his last illness:[5]

> Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
> Parthenope: cecini pascua, rura, duces.

Two facts stand out in this juxtaposition. *Parthenope* occurs in the same metrical position in the elegiac couplet as in the hexameter verses. Next, the verbal form *cecini* is found in a central position in both compositions. The use of *rapio* to suggest the sudden impact of death is, of course, a commonplace. The verb, however, takes on a new dimension when associated with *maturior vis* and especially with its opposite concept in the Augustan formula—*mora* in Horace's attempt to comfort Maecenas with the thought that they may not be ever separated by the sudden onslaught of death (*Odes* 2.17.5–6):

> a, te meae si partem animae *rapit*
> *maturior vis*, quid *moror* altera . . . ?[6]

The paradoxical topos of activity and lethargy, introduced as opposing themes in the Georgian epilogue, furnished the poet with a

---

[5] The oldest reference to this epigram seems to be that of Probus; cf. R. Sabbadini, *P. Vergili Maronis Opera* (Rome 1930) praef. 16: "Cuius sepulcro, quod est in via Puteolana, hoc legitur epigramma." Probus, as we see, does not bring up the question of authorship. Compilers of later *vitae* agree that the poet was the author of this distich. Two writers state that he wrote the verses on his deathbed (St. Jerome, *Vita Donatiana plenior*). Others are of the opinion that he composed the verses earlier (*Vita Don.*, Servius). See the editions of C. Hardie, *Vitae Vergilianae antiquae* (OCT 1954) and J. Brummer, *Vitae Vergilianae* (Leipzig 1912).

[6] Also in the same ode Horace reinforces this theme by contrasting the speed of Fate with the slow motion of her wings: "te Iovis impio / tutela Saturno refulgens / eripuit volucrisque Fati / tardavit alas."

philosophical motif quite in keeping with his predilections towards neo-Pythagoreanism. The prosaic pattern of his patron's motto fitted into a framework of contrasts fundamental in Pythagorean philosophy, according to Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1.5 986A22). Among the ten *archai* of this school were the contrasting themes ἠρεμῶν καὶ κινούμενον (stillness and motion). In the Georgian epilogue, the rapid progress of Augustus in his march to the Euphrates after Actium—worthy of regard by the immortal gods—is contrasted with the luxurious life of the poet as he composed his two early works in a city appropriately named after the Siren Parthenope. Vergil seems therefore to have used the phrase *tenet nunc Parthenope* as a contrasting motif to the implications of *Calabri rapuere.*

Has Vergil surprised us by putting the stamp of his individuality at the conclusion of his devastating descriptions of the effects of the plague on man and beast? There is no formal epilogue here: rather we are surprised to find what appears to be an "apologue," paralleling the ecstatic prologue of the third *Georgic* with a Dantesque grim lesson on man's mortality. The revolting picture (*Geo.* 3.561–66) of the effects of wearing the *vellera* on the victims of the plague, resulting in "feverish blisters and foul sweat" which would "run along his fetid limbs" (Fairclough), has, as we shall see, a significant sequence. The poet has chosen to use the verb *sequor* ("run along with") in his graphic exposure of decaying flesh: *atque immundus olentia sudor / membra sequebatur.*[7] The concluding verses, by introducing what I may term the "code" word *moranti*, throw light on the subtle technique of the poet:

> nec longo deinde moranti
> tempore contractos[8] artus sacer ignis edebat.

The "ethical dative" form of *moranti* has tested the ingenuity of the

[7] The verb *sequor* is unexpected here. Vergil elsewhere (*Aen.* 3.175) associates *manabat* with *sudor*: "tum gelidus toto manabat corpore sudor." Lucretius uses the archaic *diditur* (6.1167) in depicting the *sudor* of the *sacer ignis*. In an entirely different setting, instead of death and grief as in the Georgian epilogue, we have a background of love and laughter in *Aen.* 8.387–90. Venus appeals to Vulcan to start work on the Shield: "*cunctantem* amplexu molli favet." The warmth of love raced through his weakened frame: "labefacta per ossa *cucurrit.*"

[8] *Contactos* is the accepted reading. *Contractos*, found only in the Palatinus, is preferable here because it enforces the idea of contorted movement on the part of the victim in contrast to the concept implied in *moranti.*

translator: "not long had he to wait until . . ." The poet, if I am correct, has stamped the Augustan motto on this "apologue." The pictures of the "running sweat" and of the vain attempt of the victims "to halt" the penetrating *sacer ignis* were intended to convey to the poet's principal reader the inescapable lesson of the impossibility of halting (*moram*), in Horace's words, *indomita mors* (*Odes* 2.14.4). As we shall see, the addressee, Postumus, in that ode appears to stand for Augustus.

THREE EPILOGUES OF HORACE

Just as Vergil reserves for revelatory personal themes the epilogues to his *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, so too Horace seems to find occasion in the concluding odes to each of his three books to stress his dependence on his patrons by injecting into these poems what seem to be motifs from the same specific source, the guiding principle favored by the Princeps. By this is meant that both poets attempted to catch the eyes and ears of their principal reader (cf. *Epist.* 1.13.17: "carmina, quae possint oculos auresque *morari* / Caesaris") by setting in a conspicuous place in their *volumina* verses which had a fairly recognizable relationship to the policies of Augustus epitomized in his oft-repeated injunction "hasten slowly" (*speude bradeôs*, Suet. *Aug.* 25.4).

To subject Horace's delicate ode (1.38), which comes as a surprise at the end of the first book, to critical analysis is hardly a position which a critic would prefer to take when faced with such a fragile work of art. The fact that the poet chose to place this brief epilogue of two stanzas at the end of a book dedicated by reason of its two prologues to both patrons must have had more than a casual significance. The two stanzas depict a scene of preparation for what seems unusual for Horace, a festival for just two people, a master of ceremonies and his *puer*.[9] When Horace attempts to portray a more realistic banquet (2.7.23–25), the slave boy is urged to make haste (*deproperare*) and prepare wreaths of *apium* and *myrtus*. In this brief lyric, however, the *puer* is urged *not* to fuss with elaborate *coronae*: "displicent nexae philyra coronae." In

[9] Fortunately he found occasion elsewhere (3.28) to delight us with a somewhat similar scene, a little dinner with a special amphora of wine suited to the festival of Neptune—sealed when Bibulus was consul. There the poet teases his slow-moving maid to ferret out the "reluctant" (*cessantem*) jar of precious Caecuban. Cf. *Variations I* 451.

14*

a negative way too he is curtly ordered *not* to go to the extremes of searching for some corner in the garden where "a late blooming rose may linger": "mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum / sera *moretur*."   Horace has surprised us with a delicate touch here.   By a simple brush stroke the poet has achieved what would appear to be the impossible: by a brilliant metaphorical touch to cause the eyes of his principal reader "to linger" for a while.   In his Epistle to Augustus (2.1.4) Horace offers apologies for intruding on Augustus' valuable time by using the same "code" word *moror*: "si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar."[10]   This is the expression ("oculos ... morari Caesaris," *Epist.* 1.13.17), as we have noted above, that the poet uses in the important "covering" letter for this first book, as well as for the other two which were presented to him at the same time by a blundering *sedulus minister*.   The inordinate fussiness of the messenger in the one case, who acts like a *"servus currens"* in the comedies enjoyed by Augustus (cf. Suet. *Aug.* 89), is paralleled by a situation in the epilogue to his first book of *Odes*, in which the poet instructs his servant to disdain fussiness and set a simple table for two beneath the over-arching vine.

Horace has definitely stated that his ambition as a writer was to find acceptance in the eyes of the *ingenui*.[11]   We have assumed that his principal reader and critic would have had time (*morer*) to read and enjoy the technique of Horace's prologues and epilogues.   He as well as Maecenas would, if I am right, be likely to detect—and enjoy—the expert way in which their protégé has woven into his epilogues those *immemorata* which only the initiated would appreciate.   What appropriateness to Horace's patron is there in the crude transformation of the *vates* into what appears to be a swan-like bird in the concluding ode to the second book?   Augustus might have scanned the first stanza with no great pleasure:

> non usitata nec tenui ferar
> pinna biformis per liquidum aethera
>   vates.

This conglomerate man-bird has a strange but sturdy wing formation.

---

[10] Horace ends on the same note.   He disclaims any *sedulitas* or *officium* in his approach to his patron: *nil moror officium* (264).

[11] See his letter to Maecenas (1.19.33–34): "iuvat immemorata ferentem / ingenuis oculisque legi manibusque teneri."

Are we to associate width or extent of wing with the potential power to
fly over many distant lands and seas?

> iam Daedaleo ocior Icaro
> visam gementis litora Bospori . . .

The poet was probably conscious of the difficulty of correlating the
concept of sturdy wing power with *speed*.   Hence our preference of
the more difficult reading *ocior* of some of the mss. instead of the
usually accepted *notior*, in the description of the bird-poet's flight over
so many lands, seas, and rivers, in both the East and West.   The poet's
patron may have smiled at the wry humor of the prominence given to
Icarus' wild flight.   Well he may; for this epilogue, compared to the
two others, has all the elements of burlesque—a rude but inoffensive
parody of the unwished-for flight of Augustus himself *in caelum* in
Horace's highly serious semi-prologue to his first book.   Yet the
patron may not have been convinced that there was an attempt at
parody in this epilogue, until he had reflected on the implications con-
veyed by the concluding verses of the first stanza of this ode (2.20), with
its keyword *morabor*:

> neque in terris morabor
> longius invidiaque maior
> urbes relinquam.

The metamorphosis of Augustus while still *in terris* into the winged son
of Maia, depicted in the second ode of the first book, is accompanied
with the wish of the poet that his patron may dwell long in Rome
(45–46):

> serus in caelum redeas diuque
> laetus intersis populo Quirini.[12]

So the presumed parody places its emphasis on contrary motifs by means
of the expressions *neque in terris morabor longius* and *urbes relinquam*.
The winged poet is wafted aloft out of sight into the thin air, beyond
the range of envy or regret.

   The epilogue of Horace at the conclusion of his third book of *Odes*
is perhaps the most admired example of a poet's assertion of pride and
self-satisfaction in the completion of a work.   If this brief poem was
intended to catch the eye of Augustus as well as of Maecenas, just how

---

[12] Cf. *Variations I* 435.

applicable were the ringing verses, in the framework of their time and place, to the person of the recipient? To give a partial answer to this question it will be necessary to bring into focus the implications of the famed ode to Postumus (2.14) and to probe into the possible identity of the person addressed there.

In the first place, the much admired opening stanza, like an organ prelude, presents a nearly perfect setting for the Augustan theme:

> Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume,[13]
> labuntur anni nec pietas moram[14]
>   rugis et instanti senectae
>   afferet indomitaeque morti.

Here we have the motifs of haste and delay so dear to the heart of Horace's patron. The poet, by linking the key-word *mora* with *pietas*, creates an occasion to develop this subject in the next two stanzas. Even if Postumus were to try to placate hard-eyed Pluto with three hecatombs,[15] old age and death are nevertheless inevitable: there is no distinction made between *reges* and simple *coloni*. We are led to infer that the person addressed has the power to order as many sacrificial ceremonies as there are days that speed past in a year: *quotquot eunt dies*, where *eunt* suggests the concept of *fugax annus* in the opening stanza.

---

[13] Vergil introduced the legend that Silvius, son of Aeneas, was born during the lifetime of his father. The meaning of *postumus* is clear from *Aen.* 6.763–65: "Silvius, Albanum nomen, tua postuma proles, / quem tibi longaevo serum Lavinia coniunx / educet silvis." Commenting on these verses, Aulus Gellius (2.16.5) writes: "haec enim verba significare videri possunt, Aenea vivo et iam sene natum ei Silvium et educatum." Octavian was the only son and last born to C. Octavius and Atia. Cf. Münzer, *RE* 17 (1937) 1808, s.v. "Octavius (15)." It is interesting to note that the "Postumus" of Propertius (3.12.2) is a *miles Augusti*.

[14] On *mora* as a legal term meaning "postponement," see *RE* s.v. On the play on the words *mora* and *Roma* in Claudian's *De bello Gothico* (546–47) see H. L. Levy, "Encomium and Invective in Claudian," *TAPA* 89 (1958) 342. The first century imitator of Vergil's third *Eclogue* (52–53), Calpurnius Siculus, in his *Ecl.* 2.25–27, presents a method of deciding priority in singing by use of the Italian game now known as *morra*: "ter quisque manus iactate micantes. / nec mora."

[15] *Mon. Ancyr.* 9: "vota pro valetudine mea suscipi per consules et sacerdotes quinto quoque anno senatus decrevit"; 4: "ob res a me . . . terra marique prospere gestas quinquagiens et quinquiens decrevit senatus supplicandum esse dis immortalibus. dies autem per quos ex senatus consulto supplicatum est fuere DCCCLXXXX." Cf. the description of what took place after the triple triumph of "Caesar" on the shield of Aeneas (*Aen.* 8.715–16): "dis Italis votum immortale sacrabat, / maxima ter centum totam delubra per urbem."

Even in the poet's mention of Sisyphus, son of Aeolus, there is a con-
notation of speed of the rock as it rolls down, corresponding to its slow
movement upwards (cf. Ovid, *Met.* 4.460). Our assumed identification
of Postumus with Augustus seems to find solid support in the next
stanza. There is no way to escape the urgency of death. Everything
must be left behind: your estate, your home, and cherished wife.
"Of the trees which you are now cultivating not one will follow you,
their short-lived master, except the hated cypress":

> neque harum, quas colis, arborum
> te praeter invisas cupressos
> ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

During his sixth consulship (28 B.C.) we are told by Suetonius (*Aug.*
100.4) that Augustus built the huge Mausoleum for himself and his
family between the Via Flaminia and the bank of the Tiber. The area
around the sepulchral monument was planted with trees (*silvas*) and
walks were provided for the use of the public. Strabo (5.3.8) is more
specific about the species of tree found inside this enclosure surrounded
by a wall of white marble. The garden was thickly planted with
"black poplars." What is more interesting still is the information
which Strabo gives about the trees covering the monument itself.
"The great mound . . . was thickly covered with evergreen trees to the
very summit." At the very pinnacle, he adds, there stood a bronze
image of Augustus.[16]

About the time when Horace wrote the ode to Postumus, which was
approximately the period mentioned by Vergil in his description of the
funeral of Marcellus in 23 B.C. (*Aen.* 6.874: *tumulum recentem*), the
Mausoleum was in the process of being completed (cf. Dio 53.30.5). A
start had been made without much doubt on the planting of "black
poplars" ("Lombardy poplars"?) in the sacred precinct. There seem
to have been three thick rows of evergreen plants and shrubs arranged
on tiers around the monument. The few extant remains of the

---

[16] J. Weiss, *RE* 14 (1930) 2408–9, s.v. "Mausoleum Augusti"; S. B. Platner, *The
Topography and Monuments of Ancient Rome*² (Boston 1911) 382–83; F. W. Shipley,
Chronology of the Building Operations in Rome MAAR 9 [1931] 13, note 2). Vergil's
descriptions of the three *tumuli* (of Palinurus, Misenus, Caieta) indicate that his model was
the great Mausoleum of Augustus (A. G. McKay, "Aeneas' Landfalls in Hesperia," *G &R*
14 (1967) 3–11, with photographs by R. Schoder, S. J. For the tiny *Culex*—a fanciful
correlate of the poet himself—was built an elaborate *tumulus*: cf. *Maron* 398–400.

Mausoleum indicate that there were originally two concentric walls.[17]
Naturally the cone-shaped mound itself gave occasion for the setting up
of several rows of evergreens. Thus to the viewer there would appear
to have been three circular gardens surrounding the monument. Was
Horace conscious of *his* monumental three rows or series (cf. *annorum
series*) of *Odes* (the number of poems in each book being 38, 20, 30), the
lower or first one furnishing a more solid base?[18] His three *volumina*
were presented to Augustus as his enduring *monumentum* to comple-
ment—not to displace—the magnificent contribution made by his
patron to the glory of Rome and to the perpetuation of the memory of
the Julian house.

The "Postumus" ode is a prelude to Horace's *envoi* to his three
volumes. We are prepared, therefore, by the significant reference in
the earlier poem to the special devotion of Postumus-Augustus to the
cultivation of trees, to consider the possibility that the poet had in mind
the pyramidal pile[19] that was in view on the Campus Martius in the year
23 B.C. when he wrote (3.30.1–2):

> Exegi monumentum aere perennius
> regalique situ pyramidum altius.

The huge statue in bronze at the summit of the monument must have
suggested the reflection in the first verse. The size and shape of the
Mausoleum itself was the inspiration of the following line. When

[17] During the winter of 1915, while an *Aquilo impotens* was raging outside, I recall
listening to an orchestral program in the theater built on the foundations of the Mausoleum.

[18] Those who have seen the intricate but symmetrical pattern of the mosaic pavement
in one of the rooms in the "Villa Horatiana" (Cf. E. K. Rand, *A Walk to Horace's Farm*
[Boston 1930] 46) will appreciate the poet's flair for balanced arrangement. When his
Odes were being submitted to Augustus for his approval, the messenger was warned that
the order was not to be disturbed, *sic positum* (*Epist.* 1.13.12). The eyes of Augustus
would notice, perhaps, that Horace's *monumentum* was a poem with three main divisions:
1–5, statement or *propositum*; 6–9, *non omnis moriar*; 10–16, fame as a poet worthy of an
evergreen laurel wreath. The ode preceding the "Postumus" poem is a companion
piece. Both are "ballads of trees and the master" (*in domini caput*, 13.12; *brevem dominum*,
14.24).

[19] Propertius in his imitation of Horace's epilogue links by implication the pyramidal
massiveness which is not exempt from the final tally of death with the wealth of the tomb
of Mausolus: "nec Mausolei dives fortuna sepulcri" (3.2.22). Propertius had in mind
the monument then being completed in Rome as well as the famous *sepulcrum* at
Pergamon. The Roman Mausoleum was in the planning stage in 28 B.C., and was
probably still unfinished when Horace composed his third epilogue. Cf. Shipley (above,
note 16).

Horace wrote "quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens / possit diruere," he was thinking not only of the monument's exposure to all kinds of weather; he was dwelling also on the possibility that the huge bronze statue on top (Strabo merely has *eikôn chalkê*) would be a prey to the blustering North Wind. Furthermore we now see the contrast Horace had in mind between the humble mortician's establishment and the mighty pile between the Flaminian way and the Tiber:

> non omnis moriar, multaque pars mihi
> vitabit Libitinam.

ARA PACIS AUGUSTAE

It has been pointed out that the fourth book of Horace's *Odes* may be considered in general as a commentary on the great Ara Pacis Augustae,[20] decreed by order of the Senate in 13 B.C. The occasion was the opportune return on July 4 (*maturus reditus*) of the Princeps to Rome, after an absence of three years mainly in Spain and Gaul. Horace must have read the *senatus consultum* which is recorded in the *res gestae* (12) of Augustus, in the consulship of Tiberius and Quintilius Varus: "Aram Pacis Augustae senatus pro reditu meo consecrari censuit ad campum Martium." An annual sacrifice was also decreed. The first stanza of the ode under consideration (4.5) repeats this information:

> abes iam nimium diu;
> maturum reditum pollicitus patrum
> sancto concilio redi.

This ode, like the Postumus poem, shows skill on the part of the poet in injecting the ubiquitous theme of Augustus. The use of *maturus* in regard to his return sets the keynote. Its meaning is more akin, as I have stated, to "opportune" rather than to "hasty." The adjective has retained something of its original agricultural signification (cf.

---

[20] Janice M. Benario, "Book 4 of Horace's *Odes*: Augustan Propaganda," *TAPA* 91 (1960) 339–52. The "Ara Pacis Augustae" was decreed by the Senate in 13 B.C. and dedicated Jan. 30, 9 B.C., one year before the death of the poet (cf. Shipley [above, note 16] 51). The question might arise: Does the figure of Horace (conversing with another personage, Vergil?) appear in the panel on the north side of the Ara? Not sufficient attention, it seems, has been given to the fact that the figure of Aeneas appears here in the act of sacrifice, under what is left of a tree with leaves (an *ilex?*). Does not this scene conform with the description of Vergil: "litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus" (*Aen.* 8.43)?

verses 17–40).   This point has been noticed by Aulus Gellius (10.11) in a passage in which he cites Nigidius, the contemporary Neo-Pythagorean writer and polymath, for his approval of the saying of Augustus, *speude bradeôs*: "per quod monebat, ut ad rem agendam simul adhibere-tur et industriae celeritas et diligentiae tarditas, ex quibus duobus contrariis fit maturitas."   By way of an anecdote in this ode in celebra-tion of the return of the Princeps to Rome after an absence of three years, Horace points to the incidence of *cunctatio* here (9–12): "ut mater iuvenem . . . cunctantem spatio longius annuo / dulci distinet a domo."[21] The youth's delay was caused by an adverse wind "blowing across the Carpathian sea."   The location would seem appropriate to the eyes of Augustus.   He would recall the tempests he had to face when he was obliged to return from his base at Samos on the Carpathian sea to Brundisium.   His presence was required there in order to quell a sedition that arose among his troops in that port (Suet. *Aug.* 17.3).

The tale in the form of a simile of a laggard son (*iuvenis cunctans*), which Horace introduced in his ode on the Ara Pacis, has antecedents in the fictional story of Asterie and Gyges in the seventh ode of the third book.[22]   This poem might well be entitled "De amoris constantia"

[21] Mercury upbraids Aeneas for delaying in Dido's palace and urges him to make im-mediate plans for a hasty departure (*Aen.* 4.235–36). Jupiter instructs Mercury to an-nounce his displeasure at this delay: "quid struit? aut qua spe inimica in gente *moratur* / nec prolem Ausoniam et Lavinia respicit arva?"   Mercury conveys the message in his own words (271): "qua spe Libycis *teris otia* terris?"   Hasty departure is urged (565), and with it the hope that Aurora will not find him *morantem his terris* (568).   Aeneas hesitates and is unable to speak after listening to Dido's castigation (390): "linquens multa metu *cunctantem* et multa parantem dicere."   The *iuvenis* of Horace's Ode 4.5.11 is described as *cunctantem* in an alien land.   The synonyms *cunctor* and *moror* are reflections of the Augustan motif in both poets, who thus attempt to correlate the theme of the absence of Aeneas from *Lavinia arva* to a somewhat parallel situation in the active life of the Princeps.

[22] The plight of Aeneas in Carthage furnished the model for Horace.   His love was elsewhere, as he fervently stated: "Italiam non sponte sequor" (4.361).   The *nuntius* in Horace's ode on Asterie and Gyges corresponds to Dido's sister Anna, who was sent by Dido to approach Aeneas, *iterum temptare precando*.   Horace has a similar expression, "nuntius hospitae temptare mille modis" (3.7.9–12).   The most pertinent corre-spondence in the two poets is found in the description of the resistance of Aeneas to Dido's desperate plea by way of her *nuntius*, Anna, for a short respite (*tempus inane*, 433).   Vergil's words, "sed nullis ille movetur / fletibus, aut *voces* ullas tractabilis *audit*" (438), are echoed in Horace's depiction of the reaction of Gyges to the passionate appeal of the *nuntius* of Chloe, his hostess, in a foreign land: "nam scopulis surdior Icari / *voces audit* adhuc integer."   Ovid, as one might expect, has explored the theme of the absent and tarrying lover (cf. *Her.* 13.115, 132).

(*constantis iuvenem fidei*, 4).   Gyges, like the anonymous *iuvenis* in the poem in celebration of Augustus' return to Rome after a period of absence, is detained by a storm in winter off the coast of Epirus.   This storm could very well have been suggested by the second of two which Augustus endured before and after he reached Brundisium with the purpose of coming to terms with his seditious soldiers stationed there. The two odes, therefore, seem to have been based on two aspects of the historical events described by Suetonius (*Aug.* 17.3).   The storm in one ode stems from a region in the Carpathian sea; in the present poem the young man is detained by bad weather at a place specifically named Oricum in Epirus.   Suetonius gives details of the wreck of some of the fleet of Augustus *circa montes Ceraunios*, including the ship *in qua vehebatur*.   The story of the detention of Gyges has all the aspects of a tale out of "Arabian Nights."   His faithfulness is put to the test by his amorous hostess, who reminds Gyges of the fate of another recalcitrant lover, *castus Bellerophontes*, who eventually was to meet a *timely* death (*maturare necem*, 16).   Asterie at home is advised not to listen to the serenades of her neighbor Enipeus, who has much to commend him. He is an expert horseman (*equum sciens*) on the Campus Martius, and no one can outdo him in *speed* as a swimmer: "nec quisquam citus aeque / Tusco denatat alveo."   This pleasant fiction was intended by Horace to offset the relative rigidity of the so-called "patriotic odes" (3.1–6) which this poem follows.   This poem too may be considered as a genial introduction or prelude to the later ceremonial ode on Augustus' return.   Both poems reveal artistically interwoven themes such as to delight Horace's powerful patron and sympathetic critic.

MESSALLA

That a tincture, so to speak, of the approved Augustan formula, *speude bradeôs*, should brush off on captains who fought either on land or sea under Augustus, is indicated quite clearly in an anonymous poet's eulogy of M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, who took part as consul of the year in the naval engagement off Actium (31 B.C.).[23]   The author of this rhapsodic poem turns from a comparison of his hero with Ulysses

---

[23] This eulogy of Messala is ascribed to Tibullus (3.7 [4.1]).   The author was evidently familiar with the formulae popular in court circles especially after Actium.

to depict his *belli artes* in campaigns on land.   In highly artificial fashion
the familiar themes are introduced.   The "slow stake" is contrasted
with the "speedy arrow" (*tardam sudem, celerem sagittam*, 89).   The
military *pilus* is termed *lentus*.   The *equus* is either *celer* or *tardus*.   In
his epilogue, this poet does not refrain from playfully showing forth his
familiarity with this well-worn formula: "seu matura dies celerem
properat mihi mortem" (205).   In his fanciful metamorphosis he
foresees himself as a "taurus gloria tardi pecoris" or as "per liquidum
volucris ... aera" (208–9).

Let us turn from this rude attempt at poetical obeisance to a more
polished piece of literary craftsmanship.   In *Odes* 3.21 Horace extends,
in the form of a hymn to a *pia testa* of superb mellow wine, an invitation
to the same Messalla to be a principal guest at a *convivium* at which that
particular wine would be the prime attraction.   Before the laudatory
invocations to the *testa*, the poet makes it clear that the special wine—
sealed in the year of Horace's birth—was the wine that "Corvinus"
wished to be served ("bestir itself") on this happy occasion: *moveri
digna bono die*.   The honored guest is pictured as looking up in the
direction of the customary storage place and addressing the jar,
"descende Corvino iubente / promere languidiora vina."   Horace at
this stage, if I am right, made an unsuccessful attempt to rival his own
exquisite model (3.28) in which he addresses his maid to be nimble and
bring forth a jar of *reconditum Caecubum*.   The maid had to be urged
deripere horreo cessantem Bibuli consulis amphoram.   Elsewhere I have
pointed out the "total recall" in the participial adjective *cessantem*—the
jar was "reluctant" to be snatched from its hiding place.[24]   The
reader was expected to recall in that ode the many poetical attempts in
contemporary court poetry to reflect the familiar Augustan cliché.
Very faintly in the "Messalla" ode Horace limns the appropriate senti-
ments of hurry (*moveri ... descende*), and vaguely in *languidiora vina* the
idea of inertness—as in the "Postumus" ode discussed above the con-
trasting motif is that of Cocytos as a *flumen languidum*.   Was Horace
actually conscious of his lack of formal *callida iunctura* here?   Perhaps
so, if we interpret the next verse as a reprimand at his own dullness of
wit: "te lene tormentum ingenio admoves / plerumque duro."[25]   His

[24] Cf. *Variations I* 451.
[25] See Steele Commager, "The Function of Wine in Horace's Odes," *TAPA* 88

successful adaptation here of the well known adage is reserved for the final stanza. This represents the culminating *votum* of a parody of a hymn to a *pia testa* of old, very mellow wine. In substance Horace, addressing the wine-jar, expresses his pious wish in the final stanza, "May convivial drinking and laughter and the Graces slow to unbend and the brilliant lamps help to prolong thee until the bright Sun returns to put the stars to flight." There are two key words here: *segnes*, which denotes slowness, and *producant*,[26] which signifies prolongation. These concepts are effectively contrasted with the verb depicting the swiftness of flight, *fugat*.

> te Liber et, si laeta aderit, Venus
> segnesque nodum solvere Gratiae
>   vivaeque producant lucernae,
>   dum rediens fugat astra Phoebus.

Did the poet feel confident that he had by vivid contrast conveyed artistically the substance of Augustus' guiding principle in peace and war? The Princeps would appreciate "the labor of the file" in this *jeu d'esprit*.[27] He would also enjoy the overall humor of a scene in which both participants had been in the losing side at the battle of Philippi. Messalla was also a bucolic poet, following, at least in the names of some of his characters (*Catalepton* 9.18), the model of the Vergilian pastoral— which seems to have been itself the *fons et origo* of all those subtleties (see "Introductory Note," above).[28]

(1957) 68, noting the invocation to Liber in the last stanza of this ode: "Yet in the Odes wine customarily exercises a beneficent influence, and courage, eloquence, *wit* and hope find a common source in Liber" (italics mine).

[26] The subjunctive, not the future, seems to be the form required in the concluding verses—the actual *votum*—of this parody of a hymn. In two poems patterned on the hymn form, Catullus (34.24; 44.21) uses the subjunctive of the verb denoting the wish fulfilment in the final stanzas. On the subject of parodies of prayers, see H. Kleinknecht, *Die Gebetsparodie in der Antike* (Stuttgart-Berlin 1947) 178–79.

[27] *Epistle* 2.1, since it is addressed directly to Augustus, should be read in the light of what was expected of court poets in order to win the appreciation of their principal critic. The efforts made by the *scriptores praestantissimi* to flatter the Princeps should be such as showed evidence of good taste. The remarks of Suetonius at *Aug.* 89.5 remind us of that fact.

[28] It will be seen that our approach, in this and earlier studies of certain aspects of Augustan poetry, is from the alleged point of view of the contemporary reader, by-passing, for the most part, the important phase of purely literary influences.

SUMMARY

A new approach has been made to certain aspects of the art of Vergil
and of Horace, starting with an analysis of some epilogues of Vergil
(*Geo.* 3.563–66; 4.559–66).   It is suggested that Vergil's epitaph follows
a pattern in which we can detect, as in one of his epilogues, a discernible
conceptual allusion to the favorite guiding principle of Augustus
(*speude bradeôs*)—a paradox which suggests one of the Pythagorean
opposites, movement and rest.   An attempt has been made to subject
three of the epilogues of Horace's *Odes* (1.38; 2.20; 3.30) to critical
appraisal.   Unless I am mistaken, Horace too in his usual genial manner
injects into these conspicuous poems something of the philosophy of the
Princeps.   In two of his odes—the first one a prelude—celebrating the
return of Augustus to Rome (3.7; 4.5), Horace cleverly introduced
the Augustan motif of "delay," as a precedent to his happy *reditus* when
the Senate in 13 B.C. decreed the erection of the Ara Pacis Augustae.
The "Postumus" ode is a forerunner of his final epilogue.   The high
regard which Postumus-Augustus had for trees "which will not follow
him"—except the "hated cypress"—recalls the fact that his Mausoleum
with its enclosed garden was designed by Augustus in 28 B.C. and nearly
completed in 23 when the epilogue to Book 3 was written.   This ode
is the poet's reflection on *his* memorial which will not be subject to
time and tide.   Finally there is presented an analysis of *Odes* 3.21 for its
characterization of M. Valerius Messalla, a participant like Horace in the
losing side at Philippi.   This ode betrays a subtle touch of the same
Augustan motif which seems to have permeated much of the court
poetry of this period.