

QUEM TU, MELPOMENE: THE POET'S LOWERED VOICE (C. IV 3)

Odes IV 3 is characterized by a number of features which may be classed under the joint heading: suppression of the personal and descriptive understatement of the poet's world. These are detectable in the peculiar structure of the opening priamel and antithesis and the following corroborative *exemplum*; in the complete absence of indices of personal effort on the poet's part, including reference to his rise from humble origins; his preference for a public landscape, in contrast to the totally private nature of the poet's initiation; the absence of typical mythological and symbolic accoutrements and other *topoi* of poetic landscape and the poet's career—all generally in keeping with the spirit of *Odes* IV and in contrast to the poetry odes of the earlier books.

In the next last chapter of his book *Horace*, a chapter whose title «Indian Summer» captures, I think, the essence of the Horatian spirit in the 15 poems of *Odes* IV, Kenneth Reckford writes: «The personality that greets us in these odes is unfamiliar, like an old friend met after a lapse of years»¹. One cannot hope to improve upon the simile or the brevity. David H. Porter sees eight major recurrent motifs in *Odes* IV: the river; birds and flying; Venus and love; wealth, commerce, and gifts; war; fire and light; trees and flowers; music and dancing². By this

¹ Kenneth J. Reckford, *Horace*, Twayne World Authors Series 73, New York 1969, p. 123.

² David H. Porter, «The Recurrent Motifs on Horace, *Carmina* IV», *HCIS* 79, 1975, pp. 189-228. For other analyses of themes and the general structure of *Odes* IV see Walter Wili, *Horaz und die augusteische Kultur*, Basel 1947, pp. 354-72; Dag Norberg, «Le quatrième livre des *Odes* d'Horace», *EMERITA* 20, 1952, pp. 95-107; Eduard Fränkel, *Horace*, Oxford 1957, pp. 400-53; Giovanni Barra, «Sul quarto libro dell'Odi di Orazio», *AFLN* 8, 1958-59, pp. 19-42; Janice M. Benario, «Book 4 of Horace's *Odes*: Augustan Propaganda», *TAPhA* 91, 1960, pp. 339-52; Walter Ludwig, «Die Anordnung des vierten Horazischen Odenbuches», *MH* 18, 1961, pp. 1-10; Carl Becker, *Das Spätwerk des Horaz*, Göttingen 1963, pp. 121-93; A. La Penna, *Orazio e l'ideologia del principato*, Turin 1963, p. 136 ff.; Reckford, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-38. Any further reference to the above and any subsequent reference to any other work after its first

standard, C. IV 3, *Quem tu, Melpomene*, the only poem of the 15 to be found in all eight categories, is the book's quintessential ode. I would like to offer in this connection some observations on the piece, a general favorite, which —except for the difficulties some have seen in *uatum... choros* (15) and the censures of the free-wheeling Peerlkamp— has come down to us virtually free of negative criticism³. I myself consider the poem one of Horace's best: spare and stately, cleanly cut, superbly structured, perhaps the most felicitous offspring of the wedding of Greek song to Italian measures. In many respects it best typifies the changes one perceives in *Odes* IV in Horace's attitude towards himself as a poet and towards the Roman world around him. Indeed, measured against the major poetry odes of the earlier lyric collection, *Quem tu, Melpomene* comes off as a precedent shattering piece⁴.

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
nascentem placido lumine uideris,
illum non labor Isthmius
clarabit pugilem, non equos inpiger

curru ducet Achaico
uictorem, neque res bellica Deliis
ornatum foliis ducem,
quod regum tumidas contuderit minas,

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ostendet Capitolio:
sed quae Tibur aquae fertile praefluunt
et spissae nemorum comae
fingent Aeolio carmine nobilem.

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citation will be by author's name only. Where more than one work of an author is cited, subsequent references will be by name and short title. The following commentaries will be cited by author's name and volume number (if needed): Adolf Kiessling and Richard Heinze, *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Oden und Epoden*, Zürich/Berlin 1964¹¹ = Kiessling-Heinze; R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes, Book I*, Oxford 1970 = Nisbet-Hubbard I; *A Commentary on Horace: Odes, Book II*, Oxford 1978 = Nisbet-Hubbard II; Hans Peter Syndikus, *Die Lyrik des Horaz: Eine Interpretation der Oden*, Impulse der Forschung 6, Band I: Erstes und zweites Buch, Darmstadt 1972 = Syndikus I; Impulse der Forschung 7, Band II: Drittes und viertes Buch, Darmstadt 1973 = Syndikus II (Syndikus is not really a commentary, but I list it here because it treats all the odes in order). The text of Horace is Friedrich Klingner, *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, BT, Leipzig 1959³, repr. 1970.

³ See the discussion in Fraenkel, *Horace*, p. 408, n. 3.

⁴ On C. IV 3 see Fraenkel, *Horace*, pp. 407-10; Steele Commager, *The Odes of Horace: A Critical Study*, New Haven 1962, pp. 19-20; Becker, pp. 174-85; Irene Troxler-Keller, *Die Dichterlandschaft des Horaz*, Heidelberg 1964, pp. 141-50; E. Marotti, «Curru Achaicus», *AAntHung.* 14, 1966, pp. 359-69; Syndikus II, pp. 311-18.

Romae, principis urbium,
 dignatur suboles inter amabilis
 uatum ponere me choros, 15
 et iam dente minus mordeor inuido.

o testudinis aureae
 dulcem quae strepitum, Pieri, temperas,
 o mutis quoque piscibus
 donatura cycni, si libeat, sonum, 20

totum muneris hoc tui est,
 quod monstror digito praetereuntium
 Romanae fidicen lyrae;
 quod spiro et placeo, si placeo, tuum est.

The poem shares a number of motifs with C. I 1: *Maecenas atavis*, II 20; *Non usitata*, III 4; *Descende caelo*, and III 30: *Exegi monumentum*: the list of *bioi* in priamel form, the cool and shady grove, the grace conferred by the muse (I 1); the muse Melpomene, Aeolian song, and *princeps* (III 30); *inuidia* (II 20), coronation (I 1, III 30), and recognition / fame (I 1, II 20, III 30); and the story from his childhood in III 4 recalled by *nascentem* in IV 3, 2⁵.

It has been observed that in C. IV 3 the *bioi* of I 1 have been distilled down to essentials: the supreme moments of glory in the Greek and Roman worlds, the victories of Greek boxer and charioteer and the glorification of the Roman *triumphator*⁶. Horace presents these in a

⁵ On C. I 1 see Dag Norberg, «L'Olympionique, le poète et leur renom éternel: contribution à l'étude de l'Ode I 1», *Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift* 6, 1945, pp. 1-42; Herbert Musurillo, «The Poet's Apotheosis: Horace, Odes I 1», *TAPhA* 93, 1962, pp. 230-39; Troxler-Keller, pp. 32-47; James H. Shey, «The Poet's Progress», *Arethusa* 4, 1971, pp. 185-96; Karl Vretska, «Horatius, Carm. I 1», *Hermes* 99, 1971, pp. 323-35; Syndikus I, pp. 23-37; on II 20 see E. T. Silk, «A Fresh Approach to Horace II 20», *AJPh* 77, 1956, pp. 255-63; Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 299-302; W. R. Johnson, «The Boastful Bird: Notes on Horatian Modesty», *CJ* 61, 1966, pp. 272-75; Douglas J. Stewart, «The Poet as Bird in Aristophanes and Horace», *CJ* 62, 1967, pp. 357-61; K. Gantar, «Horazens Apokynosis: Zur Interpretation von C. II 20», *ZA* 21, 1971, pp. 135-40; James Tatum, «Non Usitata nec Tenui Ferar», *TAPhA* 94, 1973, pp. 4-25; Nisbet-Hubbard II, pp. 332-37; on III 4 see Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 273-85; I. Borzsák, «Descende Caelo», *AAntHung.* 8, 1960, pp. 369-86; Commager, pp. 194-201; Troxler-Keller, pp. 27-32, 100-08; Walter Marg, «Zum Musengedicht des Horaz (Carm. III 4)», *Kieler Festschrift für Erich Burck*, Monumentum Chiloniense: Studien zur augusteischen Zeit, Amsterdam 1975, pp. 385-99; James P. Holoka, «Horace, Carm. III 4: The Place of the Poet», *CB* 52, 1976, pp. 41-46; on III 30 see Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 302-07; E. Marotti, «Princeps Aeolium Carmen ad Italos Deduxisse Modos», *AAntHung.* 13, 1965, pp. 97-109; Viktor Pöschl, «Die Horazode: Exegi Monumentum (C. III 30)», *GIF* 20, 1967, pp. 261-72; Michael C. Putnam, «Horace C. III 30: The Lyricist as Hero», *Ramus* 2, 1973, pp. 1-19; Syndikus II, pp. 272-82.

⁶ See Becker, pp. 179-80; Syndikus II, p. 312.

series of negatives which draw the reader towards the grammatical, rhetorical, and intellectual resolution of the issue opened at the start: the fortune of the *illum*. The intervening *non*-clauses are a retardation, as Becker, p. 180, describes them, of what is finally a gnome: *quem nascentem placido lumine uideris, illum Tiburis aquae et nemorum comae fingent nobilem*. But boxer, charioteer, and *triumphator*, all three of which appear as motifs in C. IV 2, do more than just exemplify glory in the Greek and Roman worlds⁷. In the boxing match, where two athletes are directly pitted against each other in violent and potentially harmful physical contact, and in the chariot race, where to the excitement of a full field of contestants is added the danger of violence and injury, the competitive spirit of the Greek games, the struggle, or better, strife, finds more graphic expression than in the other forms of Greek athletic competition⁸. Pindar, with whom Horace was quite familiar, saw the analogy between athletics and warfare⁹. This analogy, as well as the fact that the Roman *triumphator* is crowned with Delian laurel and rides a chariot like the victor in his *currus Achaicus*, eases the transition from Greek to Roman *exemplum*. In Roman public life, military success and an ensuing triumph will provide, like the Greek events preceding, a more graphic example of victory through strife than a purely civic victory of one kind or another.

Of very special interest in this regard is line 8: *quod regum tumidas contuderit minas*. Surely no Roman need be told why a *triumphator* triumphs, any more than he need be told why the Greek athlete is victorious: he has won out over the competition or the enemy. Moreover, Rome, like most other societies, maintained the legal fiction that she fought only just wars against the perceived threats of hostile forces¹⁰,

⁷ Cf. C. IV 2, 17-20 and 33-52.

⁸ Maroti, «*Currus Achaicus*», offers considerable evidence to support a different view of the Greek *exempla*: that only one athletic type is chosen, the boxer, and that *curru... Achaico* refers not to a charioteer, but to the traditional triumphant return to his home city of the victorious athlete (here, the return of the boxer). The boxer is selected as representative of the Greek athlete in general because in Homer he is the most honored of athletes (pp. 262-63). Later scholars, however, still speak of boxer and charioteer.

⁹ For athletics and warfare in Pindar see C. M. Bowra, *Pindar*, Oxford 1964, p. 183 ff.

¹⁰ Maroti, «*Currus Achaicus*», p. 361, sees it in terms of Vergil's *debellare superbos* (*Aen.* VI 853); cf. *Ep.* 9, 9, *minatus urbi uincla* (civil war); 16, 4, *minacis... Porsennae*; C. II 7, 11-12, *minaces / turpe solum tetigere mento* (civil war); 12, 12 *regum colla minacium*; IV 8, 16, *Hannibalis minas*. The last is in a passage some prefer to see as an interpolation (from the caesura in 15 to the caesura in 19) on the grounds that Horace has conflated the Second and Third Punic Wars and the

and one would hard put to find many foreign wars in recent imperial or republican history which were not fought in one way or another against kings, be they Mithridates, Vercingetorix, or Cleopatra. The detail, however, is not gratuitous: it specifies a context (ruling out, for example, any thought of civil war and appealing to traditional Roman sentiment against *regnum*); it singles out individual opponents —*triumphator* against *reges*— and so renders the motif of strife more graphic; and, by describing the actual reason for the *triumphator*'s moment of glory (something not done for the two athletes), it gives more weight to the Roman *exemplum*.

Contundere minas is a vivid, violent metaphor, *moreso*, say, than *comprimere minas* would be¹¹. In its literal sense *contundere* would describe appropriately the actions of the *pugil*, which establishes another link between the strife of athletics and warfare¹². Horace then follows with the resolution to the *non... non... neque...* retardation: it is the *rura Tiburis* which *figent illum Aeolio carmine nobilem*. Figurative uses of *figere* go back at least to Plautus and Lucilius¹³. By the time of Augustus, however, such uses have become so common that they seem at times to mean little more than *facere*, losing any sense of an original metaphor based on a notion like *formare* or *plasmare*¹⁴. There is clearly a point, after all, when a figure becomes so hackneyed that it is no longer perceived figuratively. How often, for instance, do we note the metaphor when we do something «in the nick of time» or reflect that the «ounce of prevention» is an ounce of «getting there beforehand»? The question naturally arises whether in this context *figent* might have been perceived figuratively at all. But let us assume for the moment that it might have and contrast it with *contuderit*. The verbs are much of a kind, each carrying a literal sense of the modification of some physical substance by hand or tool¹⁵; figurative uses will necessarily

Elder and Younger Africani, when the allusion to Ennius indicates he meant the Second and the Elder.

¹¹ E. g., Cicero, *Mur.* 24, *comprimat tribunicios furores*; *Vat.* 2, *ferocitatem istam tuam comprimere*. I have not seen *comprimere minas*, but it is clearly a possible metaphor. Of course, *compresserit minas* would not be possible in the line in the same position as *contuderit minas*.

¹² E. g., Plautus, *Amph.* 407, *me pugnis contudit*; Cicero, *Tusc.* II 40, *pugiles caestibus contusi*.

¹³ E. g., Plautus, *Trin.* 363, *sapiens... fingit fortunam sibi*; *Capt.* 304, *fortuna humana fingit... ut lubet*; Lucilius 631, *fictis uersibus*.

¹⁴ See *TLL*, VI 772-73, nos. 5, 6. I do not perceive such a weakening of the sense of *contundere* in its figurative uses. Elsewhere Horace has *Pacori manus / inauspicatos contudit impetus* (*C.* III 6, 9-10).

¹⁵ *TLL*, IV 804 has «aliquid pila contundere, conterere, in pulverem redigere».

extend that sense in some way. But *contuderit* is violent, *figent* pacific; the former overcomes, destroys, the latter fashions gently, builds. But if figurative *figere* has become hackneyed to the point of meaning little more than *facere*, Horace freshens the metaphor in a bold way. In C. IV 2, 31-32 he had said: *operosa paruos / carmina fingo*¹⁶. The subsequent reversal in C. IV 3 from the poet who *figit carmina* to the *rura* which *figent poetam nobilem* seems to be without precedent and thereby renders *figent* as vigorously metaphorical as *contuderit*¹⁷. Measured, then, against the preceding *exempla* of strife and due in good part to the contrasting metaphors, the poet's world is depicted as free of competition, struggle, strife¹⁸; with immediate reference to C. IV 2, free of that *studium aemulationis* which may lead to literary disaster; free, certainly, of competition with other poets; free, as well, of that strife with the language and the self which is the department of *ars*, which goes unmentioned in the poem, that peculiarly personal and learned discipline which complements the inborn gift: *ingenium*¹⁹. The *labor plurimus* of the bee-like Horace in C. IV 2 (even though self-deprecatory by comparison with Pindaric grandeur and ease) becomes the *labor Isthmius* of the boxer, the poet becomes the *fictum* from the *fictor*, and it all seems simply to happen, if the muse but confer the grace.

And it can happen to anyone, for the opening clause, ll. 1-2, is a general relative, with the verb either a perfect subjunctive or a future perfect indicative, while the verbs in the *non*-clauses and the resolution are all futures. The statement applies to anyone upon whom the goddess may look or shall have looked with gracious eye at birth. Horace, of

¹⁶ In such a context, particularly with *per laborem plurimum* and *operosa*, the original sense of *figere* is probably more perceptible than usual, although *figere* with poetry and language in general is also standard fare by this time; see *TLL*, VI 774, nos. 7, 8.

¹⁷ See M. Owen Lee, «Everything Is Full of Gods: A Discussion of Horace's Imagery», *Arion* 9, 1970, pp. 246-47. On p. 259 he draws an analogy between C. III 13, *O fons Bandusiae*, and the *rura Tiburis* of IV 3: «Tivoli's water and trees shape the poet even as he uses them to shape his songs».

¹⁸ In this respect my point is better served by Maroti, «Curus Achaicus», for if the *triumphator's contuderit* suits the boxer and he is the only athlete in the *exemplum*, then *figent* contrasts with everything that precedes, Greek and Roman, which makes for a sharper delineation of issues. See also his comment, «Princeps Aeolium Carmen», p. 104, on the competitive spirit in Greek and Roman poetry.

¹⁹ *Ars* appears in C. IV 6, but it is the gift of Apollo (29-30):

spiritum Phoebus mihi, Phoebus artem
carminis nomenque dedit poetae.

On this theme of ease, Fränkel, *Horace*, p. 436, speaking of C. IV 2, sees «no trace here of the almost fanatical courage which Horace pictures in the Bacchus ode [C. III 25]». The same may surely be said for C. IV 3.

course, could have generalized even further by pluralizing (*quos, nascentes, illos, pugiles, uictores, ornatos, duces, contuderint, nobiles*) with no change in meter or sentence structure, but he chose not to go so far. For one reason, to do so would have lessened the effect of the motif of strife, which seems more sharply defined an issue when deployed in terms of fewer combatants. For another, Aeolian song and Tibur will naturally suggest Horace himself²⁰. The resulting ambiguity, however, makes for better poetry: for just as one tension is established by the retarding *non*-clauses, so at the resolution of that tension another is set before the reader: the poet simultaneously means by allusion, yet grammatically and thus logically cannot mean, himself, except by inclusion in the general, a point which cannot be overemphasized²¹. In any case, if one associates Tibur with Horace, nowhere in the *Opera* is the locale so intimate a symbol of the poet's private life as his beloved Sabine farm, recurrent scene of physical, social, psychological, and intellectual refreshment²².

In the following strophe we find some gentle self-mockery in *o mutis quoque piscibus*, etc. (19-20). The ascription of this miraculous power to the muse's good pleasure extends the field of her potential beneficiaries to include the scaly tribe as fellows of Horace in the *collegium poetarum*; and, if we view the preceding *o testudinis aureae*, etc. (17-18) in the same way, to the «shelly» tribe as well (a possible tweak at his awe inspiring occasional model, Pindar [Χρυσέα φόρμιγγε, *Py.* I 1], whom he has just celebrated in C. IV 2²³). Smith (p. 64), discussing the brief *recusationes* at C. II 1, 37-40 and III 3, 69-72, observes:

²⁰ It has been suggested that something similar happens in C. IV 6 in *Dauniae defende decus Camenae* (27), that is, indirect allusion to himself via the poetic *Dauniae* for *Apulae*. Although Horace effects a similar retardation in the long description of Apollo, the sentence does not have the same tension as C. IV 3, 1-12: there the series of negatives sets up a much stronger expectation, for the reader knows the issue will be resolved when the poet gives the «right» answer; here the range of possible ways to end the sentence is much broader.

²¹ Typically, scholars simply note the fact that Horace means himself and then pass on to other considerations; I think the anonymous inclusion in the general of greater significance. See Troxler-Keller, pp. 142-43; Syndikus II, pp. 315-16.

²² See Troxler-Keller, pp. 139-40.

²³ On C. IV 2 see Eduard Fränkel, «Das Pindargedicht des Horaz», *Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1933, pp. 3-27; J. H. Waszink, «Horaz und Pindar», *A&A* 12, 1966, pp. 111-24; Otto Seel, «Maiore Poeta Plectro», *Antike Lyrik*, ed. Werner Eisenhut, Darmstadt 1970, pp. 143-81; N. T. Kennedy, «Pindar and Horace», *AC* 18, 1975, pp. 9-24. Kennedy, p. 21, notes that Pindar himself admires the bee, which has led some to question the sincerity of Horace's apparent self-depreciation. On the *recusatio* as a whole in Horace and his sincerity in C. IV 2 see Peter L. Smith, «Poetic Tensions in the Horatian *Recusatio*», *AJPh* 89, 1968, pp. 56-65; see also

L, 2.^o — 4

In the normal *recusatio* (e.g., C. I 6), it is the Muse who applies the restraint; here the Muse must be shown the impropriety of her ambitious song. A similar inversion of the ambivalent stance is the tendency to undercut an extravagant posture by means of an intentional incongruity. This is surely the poet's intention in *Odes* IV 3, 17-20.

But given Horace's invitation to compose the official hymn for the Secular Games, his resulting position as unofficial «poet laureate» of Rome, and a number of other features of the ode to Melpomene which remain to be discussed and which indicate a far more restrained statement of his position as a poet and of his poetic achievement than anything in *Odes* I-III, I do not think C. IV 3, 17-20 so very extravagant, much less a posture²⁴. If there is a toning down at all, an undercutting, it is to be found in the introduction of the motif of *invidia* in l. 16, *et iam dente minus mordeor inuido*. The tone of the line avoids the hyperbole of C. II 20, 4-5: *invidiaque maior / urbis relinquam*, while enabling the poet to draw back ever so slightly from the expansiveness of ll. 13-15 by admitting that *invidia* (which may suggest competitiveness) still has her foot in the door²⁵. If Smith's undercutting has a place, it is in terms of what immediately precedes *o testudinis aureae*, etc.: that is, the humor of ll. 17-20 momentarily lightens the mood after the introduction of the negative note of *invidia*.

As a further index of the effortlessness of Horace's poetic achievement and the almost total submersion of the personal, the generalized poet of ll. 1-2 and 10-12 (including Horace), and then Horace himself in ll. 13-23, is portrayed as the passive recipient of action from without (that is, as an accusative direct object, or as the subject of a passive verb). Only the last line departs from this scheme. Yet even here, *spiro* and *placeo* are qualified by *si placeo*, and the whole in any case is attributed to the muse, a far cry from the active role assumed in C. II 20 and III 30.

Walter Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, Hermes Einzelschriften 17, 1960, pp. 268-71; and Becker, pp. 121-34, who does not believe the poem is a *recusatio* at all.

²⁴ See J. K. Newman, «The fate of the *uates*-concept in Horace's later work», *The Concept of Vates in Augustan Poetry*, Collection Latomus 89, Brussels 1967, pp. 53-74. Newman advances the theory that in Horace's later work *uates* comes to mean for him no more than *poeta*, that it loses the exalted sense attributed to it in his earlier work. This view too, then, argues against seeing any extravagance in C. IV 3, 13-16.

²⁵ Generally, *invidia* is taken to be that of Horace's critics. See Kiessling-Heinze, *ad loc.*; see also Ross Kilpatrick, «Horace and his Critics: *Epist.* I 19», *Phoenix* 29, 1975, pp. 117-27. The idea that *invidia* may belong to Horace as well may be worth looking into. One source of such *invidia* would be his own humble, servile origins; on this see Gilbert Highet, «Libertino Patre Natus», *AJPh* 94, 1973, pp. 268-81.

I referred earlier to the priamel, that list of alternatives or preferences culminating in the stated preference or objective situation of the poet himself²⁶. Shey (p. 188) sums it up well:

The logic of a priamel is that a series of items is mentioned only to be rejected in favor of some more attractive item. This seems a simple enough rhetorical argument, but often turns out to be in practice a rather complicated one. Normally, a basic requirement is that the author somehow make clear to his readers in what way his choice surpasses the choices of other men. This can be done in a variety of ways. He can use satire; he can show that other men's choices have drawbacks and that his is therefore to be preferred. Again he can mention a number of attractive items to be rejected in favor of his own choice, which then becomes all the more attractive and compelling because it has won out over stiff competition²⁷.

But regardless of the degree of specific criticism of the rejected choices, the poet's choice will always be to some degree antithetical to them. In addition to C. IV 3, there are, as I see it, four full-fledged priamels in the *Odes*: I 1, 2-34, where Horace lists and rejects various vocations in favor of his own, that of the poet; 7, 1-14, where the issue is one of place and the Horatian choice is Tibur; 31, 3-20, where the poet rejects possible prayers to Apollo in favor of his own; II 18, 1-11, where wealth and its conspicuous display are rejected in favor of Horace's situation: possession of a wealth of talent which commands the attention of the wealthy. There are many rhetorical structures in the *Odes* which more or less vaguely resemble the priamel, but are either too loosely constructed for the rhetorical effect of a priamel to be felt (C. I 2 and 12, for instance, are essentially lists culminating in the poet's choice), or are simply antitheses (II 16, 33-40), rather elaborate comparisons (I 16, 5-9), or other rhetorical figures. In the examples of what I consider genuine

²⁶ The *locus classicus* of the priamel is Sappho 16:

οἱ μὲν ἱππῶν στροφήν οἱ δὲ πένοντες
οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπὶ γᾶν μέλαιναν
ἔμμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὄτ-
τω τις ἔραται.

But see Nisbet-Hubbard I, pp. 1-3 for other examples.

²⁷ The subtleties of Horace's priamels are best exemplified by some of the discussion on C. I 1, the classic priamel in the *Odes*. Dag Norberg, «L'Olympionique», pp. 25-26, claims that Horace puts Olympic athlete and poet on an absolutely equal footing; Gunnar Carlsson, «L'Ode I 1 d'Horace: ses idées et sa composition», *Eranos* 44, 1946, p. 411 ff., does not. And if Horace meant to find fault with the poor farmer, so sympathetically portrayed (11-14), and the Epicurean man of leisure, so like himself (19-22), he failed to convey his meaning.

priamels (all of which, by the way, touch upon the theme of poetry), the poet's *persona* in the personal term of the figure —with only one exception— appears as the first or second word of the term, usually a *me*²⁸. This holds as well for the Horatian term of major antitheses which are not cast in priamel form²⁹. But because of the logical structure of *C. IV 3*, 1-12, the Horatian *persona* cannot make such an intrusion, making it the only such priamel in the *Odes* and the only such major antithesis, quite a departure from his usual practice.

Moreover, *C. IV 3*, 1-12 is the only priamel in which there is no hint of negative criticism of the rejected choices or, failing that, a description of the poet's choice such that the preceding choices pale by comparison. There can be little doubt in *C. I 1* that the poet faults the career of the politician, which rests on the whim of the fickle crowd, the greed of the big landowner, the inconsistency of the merchant, the soldier who delights in war, and the hunter forgetful of his tender wife³⁰. In *C. I 7* Horace gives especially high marks to Thebes, Delphi, and Athens; yet for all the luster they derive from Bacchus, Apollo, and Pallas, none of them pulsates with the sense of *numen* so detectable at Tibur, the Horatian choice³¹. In *C. I 31* most of the rejected alternatives suggest excessive wealth or the pursuit of it, a theme made plain by the *bioi* of Calenian grape grower and merchant. In *C. II 18* we see a similar theme: wealth and display are quite clearly censured. True, in *C. IV 3* the poet's life and achievement are singularly free of competition and strife and in this the poet recognizes the muse's blessing. But Horace does not suggest that this is better, nor do the *bioi* of athlete or *triumphator* seem the worse for their presence. We see here none of the shortcomings of other rejected vocations: excess of any kind, inconsistency, discontent, coldheartedness, bloodthirstiness, foolish reliance on the unreliable. And if the *triumphator* leads a warlike life, it is in service to a noble cause: *quod regum tumidas contuderit minas*. As for the recognition Horace receives, while described more fully than the recognition of athlete and *triumphator*, it is not perceived as better in any objective way (as the Tiburtine countryside in *C. I 7* is objectively more numinous than the preceding Greek places). And as for what his

²⁸ The exception is *C. II 18*, where the Horatian term does not have a *me* in the first line; but the personal element has already been given some prominence in the first, third, and fourth rejected alternatives.

²⁹ Cf. *C. I 6*, 1-8 and 13-20; 20, 9-12; *II 7*, 13-16; 16, 33-40; *IV 1*, 13-32; 2, 25-32, 41-48, and 53-60.

³⁰ See n. 27 above.

³¹ See n. 38 below.

life is, he ascribes none of it to himself, while there is no hint that athlete and *triumphator* have risen by anything but their own efforts.

Following the priamel, Horace introduces a personal corroborative *exemplum*, as he does elsewhere in the *Odes* after a generalization. In C. I 22, for example, the generalizing first two strophes, *Integer uitae scelerisque purus*, etc. lead into *namque me silua lupus in Sabina*, etc. (9-16), which corroborates the truth of the opening generalization. In C. IV 3, the personal *exemplum* in ll. 13-16 corroborates the claim that the glance of the muse leads to fame as a lyric poet, for the *suboles Romae* has canonized him as one of the *uates*. As with the terms of priamels and antithesis, the personal Horatian intrusion in the corroborative *exemplum*, again usually a *me*, appears as the first or second word of the *exemplum*³². In C. IV 3, 13-16, the *me* is buried in the third line: *uatum ponere me choro*s, its place taken by the expansive *Romae, principis urbium*, an entirely different focus from what we expect to find in such *exempla*.

Moreover, *Romae, principis urbium* itself underscores the absence in this retrospective poem of what Dieter Flach has called the «*primus-motif*»³³. In *Odes* I-III we find *carmina non prius / audita* (C. III 1, 2-3), *princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos / deduxisse modos* (III 30, 13-14), and *adhuc / indictum ore alio* (III 25, 7-8)³⁴. The claim is not limited to the *Odes*³⁵. These *loci* vary in what the poet lays specific claim to, but he clearly means a good deal more than being the first to write in such and such meters (which is not always literally true): rather, he claims preeminence, a qualitative priority, as his use of the word *princeps*, with its new meaning defined in terms of Augustus' position, indicates³⁶. Note, too, that primacy or preeminence do not denote or suggest the same as *Aeolio carmine nobilem*, for to be *nobilis* is to be known, re-

³² Cf. C. I 5, 13-16; 33, 13-16; in a similar vein, cf. the «*me quoque*» *exemplum*: I 16, 22-25; 28, 21-22; III 19, 28.

³³ Dieter Flach, *Das literarisches Verhältnis von Horaz und Properz*, Giessen 1967, pp. 70-96. See also Commager, pp. 9-12; Putnam, p. 3.

³⁴ The motif appears as well in C. IV 9, 3: *non ante uolgas per artis*, but the mock-epic *longe sonantem natus ad Aufidum* (2) lightens the mood somewhat. In any case, there is quite a difference between the claim to being *primus* or *princeps* and speaking words «through arts not widely practiced before».

³⁵ Cf. *Epist.* I 19, 21-24:

libera per uacuom posui uestigia princeps,
non aliena meo pressi pede. qui sibi fidet,
dux reget examen. Parios ego primus iambos
ostendi Latio.

³⁶ See Marotti, «*Princeps Aeolium Carmen*», pp. 108-09; Pöschl, «*Die Horazode*», p. 262; Putnam, p. 10.

cognizable, not necessarily preeminent or first. Thus the shared principate of Augustus in politics and Horace in poetry in *Odes* I-III yields in *C. IV 3* to the principate of a third entity, Rome.

Similarly conspicuous for its absence is reference to the poet's humble origins which one finds in *Odes* I-III: *pauperemque diues / me petit* (*C. II 18*, 10-11), *pauperum / sanguis parentum* (20, 5-6), and *ex humili potens* (III 30, 12). Such recollections would seem only to extoll the power of the muse for having raised him from such low estate. But once again Horace, as he chose the less personal Tibur over the Sabine farm (itself a symbol of his rise from poverty), chooses now to limit the extent to which personal details are allowed to intrude into the poem.

There remain two further considerations on *C. IV 3*: poetic landscape and the *topos* of the poet's initiation. By poetic landscape I mean a landscape appearing in some association with Horace as a poet. In *C. I 1*, 30-32 nymphs, satyrs, and a cool grove set Horace the poet apart; in 7, 12-14, after rejecting a number of places celebrated in poetry, he describes his favored Tibur; in 12, 1-6 mountainsides echo the song of his muse Clio; in 17 Faunus visits his Sabine farm, Horace speaks of his poetry and the poetry and music of Tyndaris; in 22 a wolf flees him as he sings of Lalage in the woods near his farm; in 26, 6-11 he prays to the muse, who rejoices in pure fountains, for a garland of *aprici flores* (the expression suggests a sunny meadow), that is, a poem, for his friend Lamia; in 32, 1-4 he addresses his lyre and speaks of composing in the shade; in II 19 he undergoes a mystical experience, a vision of Bacchus in remote wilds, and relates it to his poetry; in III 4, 5-36 a portent in a rural setting sets him apart, wherever he goes he will enjoy the protection of the muses; in 13 he will sacrifice to a spring and ennoble it with his song; in 25 he has another Bacchic experience, again in remote wilds and again related to his poetic gift³⁷.

³⁷ I do not consider the following odes as providing examples of poetic landscape; the reader may prefer to include some or all of them; my argumentation would not change in any major respect: *C. I 18*: the ode does not refer to Horace as a poet, although elsewhere Bacchus is a god who inspires; see Edmund T. Silk, «Bacchus and the Horatian *Recusatio*», *Studies in Latin Literature*, ed. Christopher M. Dawson and Thomas Cole, *YCIS* 21, Cambridge 1969, pp. 195-212; *I 31*: Horace rejects a series of landscapes and occupations in favor of an old age still gifted with poetry; the only landscape at all poetic in its description is *rura, quae Liris quieta / mordet aqua taciturnus amnis* (7-8), rejected along with the others; *I 38*: the ode features a garden setting; Reckford (pp. 11-13), in the tradition of Giorgio Pasquali, *Orazio Lirico: Studi*, Florence 1924 [1962], pp. 324-25, and Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 297-99, interprets it as a poem about poetic tastes; I prefer the view of Nisbet-Hubbard I, pp. 422-23, that the poem deals with more general preferences; *II 6*: Tarentum is idyllically described, but I don't think the piece is about poetry; *II 16*,

Generally speaking these landscapes are each characterized by one or more of the following: the presence of specific divinities Horace associates with his poetry or the awareness of some numinous presence (C. I 1, 30-32; 7, 12-13³⁸; 12, 2; 17, 2; 26, 9; II 19, 1-4; III 4, 6-7; 25, 1); the occurrence of preternatural or supernatural events (I 22; II 19; III 4, 25); the depiction of unspecified shade, groves, waters, caves, or of a typical *locus amoenus* (I 1, 29; 7, 12-14; 17, 17; 26, 6; 32, 1; III 4, 6-8; 25, 2-4 and 12-14); separateness, aloofness, loftiness, inaccessibility (I 1, 32; 12, 5-6; 17, 17; 22, 9³⁹; II 19, 1; III 4, 9 and 21-22; 25, 11-12); the use of evocative, foreign place names (I 12, 5-6; III 25, 10-12). Com-mager (pp. 343-44) has the following on the rural setting in Horace:

In one of the *Epistles* Horace speaks of the country as «giving me back to myself» (*Ep.* I 14, 1). The phrase confirms what so many of the *Odes* suggest, that the Italian countryside, particularly the Sabine farm, represents for Horace not only a physical environment but also a local habitation and a name for certain values. The idyllic landscapes to which he invites his friends are calculated to «give them back to themselves», to call them from the arbitrary to the essential, from the search for political or financial advantage to an awareness of the limitations and possibilities of human life. And, in some of the *Odes* still more private in their concern, the country, we might say, gives Horace to himself as an artist. With its gods Bacchus and Faunus it expresses the possibilities of isolation and commitment, of freedom and security, of creativity and peace.

The early poetic traditions of sacred groves and springs indicate how instinctive it was to link artistic inspiration with the isolation of the country. Although the mythological justification for the poet's withdrawal had disappeared by the Augustan age, there remained the self-evident fact that these myths had enshrined, that writers need solitude to compose. So Aper rationalizes in Tacitus' *Dialogus*, «Poets, if they are to produce anything worthy, must leave the conversations of their friends and the charm of the city, and leaving every other function, they must, in their own words, go into the woods and groves (*in nemora et lucos*), that is, into solitude».

27-30: Fate has given Horace a small farm, *parua rura*, and a slender muse; the gifts are related, but no real feature of the landscape is described; III 26: in this farewell to love (and love poetry), Horace summons Venus from her haunts; they are hers, not Horace's, and Horace seems to be rejecting them. As for C. II 1, 39: *Dionaeo sub antro* indicates a genre rather than a landscape, although it may be likened to other poetic caves.

³⁸ The Tiburtine countryside here fairly pulsates with *numen*: *domus Albunae resonantis* (12) and *Tiburni lucus* (13). In addition to its being the grove of a local hero, *lucus* itself almost always suggests a numinous presence. It appears only once in Horace in an indifferent sense: *uirtutem uerba putas et / lucum ligna* (*Epist.* I 6, 31-32), where he is striving for alliteration.

³⁹ Unlike Tibur, the Sabine world, because of Horace's farm, is a very private place, accessible only to those to whom the poet extends an invitation.

But in addition to this need for creative solitude, one detects in Horace a sense of exclusivity and aloofness stemming from his position as a poet. He entertains a certain disdain for the general mass of men: *mobiliū turba Quiritiū* (C. I 1, 7), *uolguſ infidū* (35, 25). In some places this is clearly related to his poetic gift (C. II 16, 38-40):

spiritum Graiae tenuem Camenae
Parca non mendax dedit et malignum
spernere uolguſ.

and, of course (III 1, 1-4):

Odi profanum uolguſ et arceo.
fauete linguis: carmina non prius
audita Musarum sacerdos
uirginibus puerisque canto.

In C. I 1, 30-32 the cool grove and the choruses of nymphs and satyrs, as mentioned above, *secernunt populo*. This last has been interpreted as a typical scene of reflective, creative solitude⁴⁰, and in this respect the *rura Tiburis* of C. IV 3 has been likened to it. But the scenes belong in two quite different categories. C. I 1 begins and ends on the motif of reward: the *palma nobilis* for the Olympic charioteer and the *hederae praemia* for the poet⁴¹. The cool grove with its choruses parallels syntactically the poet's prize of ivy (29-32):

me doctarum hederae praemia frontium
dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus
Nympharumque leues cum Satyris chori
secernunt populo,

and the *si*-clauses follow (32-34):

si neque tibiaſ
Euterpe cohibet nec Polyhymnia
Lesboum refugit tendere barbiton.

These last are the true conditional elements. Had Horace intended the *gelidum nemus* to be taken as a condition of the creative process rather than as an index of apartness and aloofness which is the poet's reward for success and if he had wished to indicate as much, he would have introduced the *gelidum nemus* with a *si*, paratactically with the *si*-clauses

⁴⁰ See Kiessling-Heinze and Nisbet-Hubbard II, *ad loc.*; Troxler-Keller, pp. 40-47; Vretska, p. 330.

⁴¹ See Norberg, «L'Olympionique», pp. 25-26.

that follow. So says the syntax, and we must take its logic for what it is. True, the isolation that comes of an exclusivity that is the reward for success itself provides the possibility for future creative solitude; but the primary function of the scene in question in C. I 1 is as a reward for success. The *rura Tiburis* of C. IV 3, on the other hand, if it makes possible, as it does, true creative retreat, does not insulate or isolate Horace in any disdainful sense from the crowd or from his public; on the contrary, it commits him to his public, making him *nobilis*; and to be *nobilis*, one must be out among men ⁴².

But in addition to this difference between the *gelidum nemus* of C. I 1 and the *rura Tiburis* of IV 3, when the latter is compared to the general run of poetic landscapes in *Odes* I-III, the following differences emerge: the Tiburtine countryside of IV 3 is specific, a public locale familiar to, accessible to, and frequented by Horace's circle of friends and the members of the class to which he has gained admission (the Sabine farm, on the other hand, is totally private, a world which others enter by invitation only); it is not depicted as lofty or remote; the divinities of poetry do not appear there, nor does one detect any numinous presence (by the evidence one finds, for instance, in I 7 or III 13); no strange and wondrous events occur there; the poet does not romanticize it by exotic, even mythological, names. It has, of course, the attributes of the typical *locus amoenus*, for it is well-watered and thickly leaved (therefore cool and shady), but these describe accurately Tibur then as Tivoli today. The scene may be considered idyllic, even ideal, but it has not been idealized. Tibur's waters neither «leap, prattling as they go» (*loquaces / lymphae desiliunt tuae*, C. III 13, 15-16), nor «struggle in flight to hasten down their crooked course» (*obliquo laborat / lympa fugax trepidare riuo*, II 3, 11-12). They are indeed *aquae*, not *lymphae*, and do nothing more remarkable in the poem (besides helping make the recipient of Melpomene's glance *nobilis*) than flow by Tibur (*praefluunt*), as the people pass by Horace (*praetereuntium*) in the streets (more than a mere suggestion here, I think, that Horace's poetic life and reputation is as much a product of his sojourns at Rome as of his retreats in the cool, meditative seclusion of the groves of Tibur). Troxler-Keller (p. 147) sees the plural *aquae* as a poetic idealization, likening them to the *amoenae aquae* of C. III 4. But while the waters of C. IV 3 are more richly connotative in the plural than would be the singular *aqua* and to that extent, if you will, more poetic, the waters of *Descende caelo* make their appearance as Horace drifts into a reverie

⁴² See Maroti, «Princeps Aeolium Carmen», p. 108.

of an unspecified *locus amoenus* and flow, to be sure, *per pios lucos*⁴³. There is the world of difference between the two. Troxler-Keller (*ibid.*) also finds *comae* highly poetic; but in fact it is an old, not to say worn-out, metaphor and in Augustan poetry one finds it very frequently of foliage⁴⁴. Comparing Tibur in C. IV 3 to Tibur in I 7, she finds the former more specific because of the three localizing names; but two of the names, *Albunea* and *Tiburnus*, are used to impart a sense of *numen*. Moreover, the passage is filled with the numinous voices of inspiration: the voice of the Sibyl herself: *resonantis*, and the sounds suggested by the depiction of running water: *praeceps Anio, mobilibus pomaria riuus*⁴⁵. Troxler-Keller (p. 148 ff.) notes that no divinity is literally present here, but says that «die Muse steht ja als geistige Macht auch hinter dieser Landschaft». Insofar as the scene symbolizes something higher and deeper than the mere reality of the Tiburtine countryside (inspiration, etc.), I agree. But I am speaking more of the literal and symbolic accoutrements of the typical poetic landscape, and see the absence of the muse, or other poetic divinity, whether as an actual divine personality or as a personification of poetic power, as a significant difference between this and the earlier landscapes, and am arguing for a descriptive understatement in the depiction of the poetic landscape. Troxler-Keller's book is a study in the development in Horace of truly Italian poetic landscape; she sees (pp. 159-60) the *rura Tiburis* of C. IV 3 (as well as IV 2) as a blend of the real and ideal. In this respect, with the exceptions I have made above, I find myself in agreement with her⁴⁶.

Poetic landscape leads to an analogous consideration: the topography of fame. C. II 20 provides the best example: Horace's reputation will reach the four points of the compass; he will in fact become an instrument of Romanization: *me peritus / discet Hiber Rhodanique potor* (19-20)⁴⁷. C. III 30 reveals a more circumscribed realm. The poet's use of

⁴³ Maurice Cunningham, «Poetic Uses of the Singular and Plural», *CPh* 43, 1949, pp. 1-14, analyses instances of *aquae* in Caesar's *Commentaries* (he deliberately chose an especially nonpoetic work) and concludes that when the author used *aquae* the fluid body described manifested itself in a multiplicity of singular instances (ripples, waves, rapids, etc.); the conclusion: the so called «poetic plural», at least in the case of *aquae*, generally corresponds to the object as a totality of singular instances or manifestations.

⁴⁴ See *TLL*, III 2, 1752-54.

⁴⁵ Some may choose to hear whisperings in the *spissae* of *spissae nemorum comae*, but I am not talking about onomatopoeia in C. I 7.

⁴⁶ Elsewhere, however, Troxler-Keller, p. 147, uses the word «Idealisierung» for Horace's description of Tibur in C. IV 3.

⁴⁷ See Kiessling-Heinze, *ad loc.* Ernst-Richard Schwinge, «Horaz, *Carmen* II 20»,

ancient ceremonies on the Capitol to measure the eternity of his fame suggests the obvious: that he will be known at Rome. But more importantly, perhaps, his achievement—in its totality: not only his poetry as such, but the fact of his rise from obscurity—will be recognized on his native soil of Apulia (10-14). In C. I 1 fame has no specific region, but ample spaces are suggested by *sublimi feriam sidera uertice* (36). In C. IV 3 Horace's fame originates in and dwells in the city of Rome (with no mention of his homeland which, like the Sabine farm, would be too personal an intrusion into the poem) and the allusion is to the streets of the city: *digito praetereuntium*, not the Capitoline hill. Nor is it the high and the mighty who confer this recognition (as in C. I 1, 35-36), but the *suboles Romae*, the youth of the city. And, unlike C. I 1, 35-36, where *quodsi* suggests Maecenas may confer more than the muses can, or II 20, where Horace recognizes no power at all as responsible for his transformation⁴⁸, or III 30, where the initial *Exegi* conveys such a strong impression of Horace's awareness of personal achievement and where, if anything, he has enhanced the reputation of the muse: *sume superbiam / quaesitam meritis* (14-15), in IV 3, even this element of recognition, which elsewhere is the gift of men in acknowledgment of what he has accomplished—is utterly a gift of the muse: *totum munus hoc tui est*.

A token of recognition and reputation is coronation. This appears as a motif in C. I 1, 29: *doctarum hederæ præmia frontium*, and III 30, 15-16: *et mihi Delphica / lauro cinge uolens, Melpomene, comam*. But in C. IV 3 the poet goes uncrowned: the crown instead is worn by the *triumphator* as he processes to the Capitol *Deliis / ornatum foliis*, wearing the laurel suitable to the poet.

Fame in C. II 20 goes hand in hand with immortality: *non ego... / ... obibo / nec Stygia cohibebor unda* (6-8). C. III 30, 6-7 conveys much the same message, but in more understated terms: *non omnis moriar multaque pars mei / uitabit Libitinam*. In C. I 1 immortality is suggested by the crown of ivy, a Dionysiac plant symbolic of either rebirth or immortality, and by *dis miscent superis* (30). It has long been generally noted that the theme of the poet's immortality is displaced in *Odes* IV by theme of the poet's power to immortalize others and that this is a

Hermes 93, 1965, p. 456, takes *peritus* with both Gaul and Spaniard and sees them as contrasted with the preceding peoples named.

⁴⁸ Silk, «A Fresh Approach», sees the poem as a kind of continuation of the Bacchic frenzy of C. II 19; thus Bacchus is responsible for the transformation; still, Horace says nothing about it.

genuinely Pindaric feature of the book. C. IV 3, however, lays claim to neither, although the latter finds strong expression in IV 8 and 9.

The glance of the goddess is a poetic initiation which from the allusion to Horace in ll. 10-12 and the corroborative *exemplum* in 13-16 we assume the poet to have undergone. The specific antecedents are generally held to be two: Hesiod, *Theogony* 81-84:

ὄντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μέγαλοιο
γαινόμενον τ' ἐσίδωσι διωτρέφειν βασιλῆων,
τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσση γλυκερὴν χεῖουσιν ἔερσην,
τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος ρεῖ μέλιχα.

And Callimachus, *Aitia*, fr. 1, 37-38 Pf.:

Μοῦσαι γὰρ ὄσους ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι παῖδας
μὴ λοξῶ, πολιοῦς οὐκ ἀπέθεντο φίλους.⁴⁹

The grace conferring glance, then, is not without precedent. But note that when Hesiod tells of his own initiation (*Theogony* 22 ff.), it takes place on the slopes of Helicon, the muses give a staff and a laurel sprig, breathe divine voice into him, grant him prophetic powers, and bid him go forth and sing. In a similar vein, a nightingale perches on the lips of the infant Stesichorus and sings (Pliny, *NH* X 82); bees seal the lips of the sleeping Pindar with wax (Pausanias X 23, 3); bees mold the limbs of the infant Pindar, cymbals clash, the nymphs dance (Philostratus, *Imag.* II 11); the infant Iamos is nurtured by snakes with honey (Pindar, *O.* VI 45 ff.)⁵⁰. These are typical of the Greek poetic (and prophetic) initiation, and Horace, familiar with the conventions, similarly employs extraordinary events in *Odes* I-III in connection with his own gift. There are three events in *Odes* I-III which have about them a strong initiatory quality. In C. II 19 Horace, admitted to a vision of Bacchus teaching the muses, is possessed by the god, a terrifying experience, which gives him the right to hymn the god and his miracles, presumably in dithyrambic form. In C. III 25 the poet, carried off by the god Bacchus, experiences a psychic metamorphosis (*mens noua*) and will embark upon new, as yet untried, themes. But C. III 4, while a less dramatic experience, is easily the most elaborate of these divine infusions: Horace, a *puer*, wanders into the wilds and falls asleep: doves cover him with myrtle and laurel to hide and protect him from serpents

⁴⁹ See Becker, pp. 176-77.

⁵⁰ See Nisbet-Hubbard II, pp. 314-15, for some other scenes of an initiatory nature. See also Otto Falter, *Der Dichter und sein Gott bei den Griechen und Römern*, Würzburg 1934.

and bears; the event is a testimonial, a true *monstrum*: *mirum quod foret omnibus* (13), for the subjunctive suggests that this was one purpose of the miracle —to mark him out⁵¹. By contrast with these and the events from the Greek tradition, the birth glance of the muse Melpomene seems a quiet event indeed. If viewed literally, as an actual event, on the assumption that the muse exists and confers her grace by a glance, it is a thoroughly unspectacular happening, non-violent, unthreatening, totally private in nature. If viewed allegorically, the glance of any god or goddess conferring the gift appropriate to his or her powers is not especially demanding symbolically. It's the difference between saying «God, my heavenly Father, protected me with his right hand» (already metaphorical, since god is not a male and has no body), and «God appeared to me as I walked in the garden and extended his right hand over me, then wrapped me in the folds of his long, flowing robe». The glance of Melpomene takes place with none of the accoutrements symbolic of poetry or typical of the poetic initiation: physical or psychic rapture, spoken commission, musical accompaniment, bird song, bees and beeswax, honey, sweet dew, doves, fronds or sprigs of appropriate flora. Moreover, the glance is only a first step: it assures that the recipient will be made a famous poet by a particular landscape, which itself is devoid of the idealized qualities of poetic landscapes typical of *Odes* I-III⁵².

The poem, then, breaks virtually all the precedents and conventions of the poetry odes of Books I-III. A number of the indices of uniqueness may be classified under «the submersion of the personal»: a priamel (and a major antithesis) without a personal Horatian term, a *me*, and without criticism of the rejected *bioi* or the suggestion that the poet's situation is somehow to be preferred; a personal corroborative *exemplum* with the *me* radically out of place; no mention of personal tokens like the Sabine farm or the poet's native Apulia; portrayal of the poet as the passive recipient of all blessings in a world free of competition and

⁵¹ On C. II 19 see Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 199-202; Syndikus I, pp. 471-79; Viktor Pöschl, «Die Dionysus Ode des Horaz (C. II 19)», *Hermes* 101, 1973, pp. 208-30; on III 25 see Fränkel, *Horace*, pp. 257-60; Syndikus II, pp. 218-23; and, of course, on both, *Silk*, «Bacchus».

⁵² Becker, p. 180, makes the distinction: «Es heisst nicht, der Hesiodstelle [*Theog.* 81 ff.] entsprechend: wenn die Musen bei der Geburt freundlich anblicken, dessen Mund hat dichterische Kraft, sondern: den wird die Landschaft Tiburs zum gefeierten Dichter äolischen Liedes heranbilden». Pasquali, p. 751, makes a similar kind of distinction with reference to C. IV 6: «Tra il poeta del v. 30 e il uates dell'ultimo par quasi di sorprendere un contrasto: poeta egli è nato per grazia degli dèi, vate è ora; perchè detta al suo popolo le preghiere care agli dèi».

striving; nothing to indicate personal effort or achievement, such as *ars*, *labor*, the *primus*- and *ex humili*-motifs; except for the humorous hyperbole following the understated acknowledgment of *invidia*, a total absence of any kind of exaggerated, inflated statement. The others may be classified under «descriptive understatement of the poetic world», although the distinction between this and the first category may be in some cases somewhat arbitrary: a real / ideal poetic landscape which, except for its being cool and shady, differs in almost all respects from the poetic landscapes of *Odes* I-III: a landscape public and accessible, suggestive of seclusion but not exclusivity, unidealized and unromanticized, distinguished by neither the presence of poetic divinities, a sense of numen, or the occurrence of unusual events: in short, a thoroughly demythologized setting; a private, unspectacular, non-testimonial poet's initiation, free of all the elements typical of such initiations; a more circumscribed topography of fame; recognition without coronation; a recognizing public consisting of the *suboles Romae*; no disdain for the general mass of men because of his position as a poet; no suggestion of the poet's immortality; the unqualified ascription of everything good to the gracious power of the muse.

We began with Reckford's observation on the «old friend met after a lapse of years» and with Porter's eight categories of recurrent motifs, Reckford continues (pp. 123-24):

We must adjust our minds. First of all, he is now successful, a «poet laureate» whose work has received official recognition and is acclaimed by the coming generation. It has been fashionable, since Chekhov's plays and Ibsen's, to denigrate success, to contrast its impotent bitterness with the unshaped but idealistic ambitions of unsuccessful beginners; but the generous concern of elder statesmen like Horace, and in our time, Eliot, for younger, aspiring poets gives the lie to that stereotype. Horace was indeed pleased by success, but his pleasure is magnanimous, like that of Wagner's noble *Meistersinger*, Hans Sachs. Second (but the two go together), Horace tends now more easily to voice the sentiments of the community: his own concerns are unobtrusive or merge with those of Rome; no tension remains between public and private. Yet an integral connection can be perceived between this Horace and the earlier one, and between the impersonal public odes of Book IV and the philosophical epistles; for if the dominant theme of natural process, birth, and right growth and death, gives unity to Book IV, its odes are also bound together in a deeper way by Horace's fairly steady and controlled attitude of acceptance, toward which he fought his way, through paradox and disillusionment, on the Sabine farm.

If, measured by Porter's eight categories, *Quem tu, Melpomene* comes off as the quintessential ode of Book IV, it is also, in its submersion of the personal and its descriptive understatement of all aspects of the poetic world, the embodiment of the spirit of the book as perceived by Reckford. The admission *non sum qualis eram* and the consequent ambivalence about the renewal of the lyric impulse in C. IV 1; the tribute to Pindar and Iullus Antonius in 2, accompanied by the frank estimate of the worth of his own poetic gift so beautifully conveyed in the last two strophes; the tributes to the young brothers Nero in 4 and 14; the genuinely motivated celebrations of Augustus in 5 and 15; the acknowledgment of success and the thanksgiving to Apollo in 6, so like 3 in spirit; the acceptance of death in 7 without the call to «gather ye rosebuds»; the openhearted promises to Censorinus and Lollius in 8 and 9; the sympathy for the young Ligurinus in 10, who will soon look in the mirror and ask: *heu... / quae mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?* (*non sum qualis eram*), a sympathy tinged with sadness, for one rather expects Ligurinus will not heed the warning; a similar feeling for Lyce in 13, whose lost beauty—despite her earlier disdain and present improprieties—the poet laments (the groan here is his):

quo fugit uenus, heu, quoue color, decens
quo motus? quid habes illius, illius,
quae spirabat amores,
quae me surpuerat mihi

(*non es qualis eras*); the warmth and sadness of the celebration in 11 with Phyllis —*meorum finis amorum*— of the absent Maecenas' birthday; the gentle melancholy of 12 with its lighthearted treatment of Horace's poems as a commodity and the call to restrained madness; the portrayal of Horace praying with others (2, 51-52; 5, 29-32; 15, 25-28) or singing with others (2, 45-48; 13, 34-35; 15, 29-32); the recurrent topic of the community of poets and magnanimous references to other poets (1; 2; 3; 6, 27-28; 8, 20; 9)⁵³, including Aeneidean allusions suggesting Vergil (4, 53-56; 6, 21-24; 7, 15; 15, 31-32)⁵⁴; the generalized descriptive understatement of his own poetic landscapes (1, 37-40; 2, 27-32 and 45-48; 3, 10-12)⁵⁵; the general absence of allusions to his origins or his private

⁵³ C. IV 1 is generally held to be about love and lyric; thus the young Paulus is a lover and a poet. In C. IV 6 I think *Daunia* = *Apulae*, as in II 1, 34-35.

⁵⁴ The reader may choose to see the Vergilius of C. IV 12 as the epic poet; the arguments are endless on either side.

⁵⁵ If C. IV 1 is about love and lyric, then the dreamscape of the last strophe, in which Horace pursues Ligurinus with mixed success, is a kind of poetic landscape; the pursuit takes place on the Campus Martius and (possibly) in the Tiber, where

life, except for the mock-epic 9, 2 and references to his own loves and friendships (or lack of them); the emphasis on (sometimes relative) youth, so positive (except for Ligurinus) in its outlook and detectable in virtually every poem; the recurrent image of family and domesticity (4, 53-56; 5, 29-36; 6, 41-44; 15, 25-32), including the motherhood of Rome, the *patria* (3, 13-14; 5, 9-16), and Augustus' sonship (5, 9-16) and fatherhood (4, 25-28); and the very fact that the entire book begins and ends on the note of *recusatio* —all of this breathes something of the spirit of C. IV 3, the expansive, magnanimous thanksgiving to the gracious Melpomene.

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swimming is closely associated with exercise in the Campus; the Campus Martius is both an urban and rural setting, a familiar, openly accessible area. In C. IV 2 the landscapes are two: first, a real / ideal Tibur, much like the one in IV 3; second, plainly urban, where Horace sings as he mingles with the crowd along the parade route.