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HORATIUS EQUES ET SCRIBA: SATIRES 1.6 AND 2.7

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In 1925, Lily Ross Taylor argued that the loose-living Roman *eques* whose portrait is drawn by Horace's slave Davus at *Satires* 2.7.53–56 is Horace himself.[1] It follows from this that at the time of the publication of *Satires* 2 (c. 30 B.C.) Horace dressed as an *eques*, wearing the narrow-striped toga and gold ring of the order; though for illicit sexual adventures at night, Davus claims, he threw these badges aside and dressed as poorly as one of his own slaves. It also follows from the word *iudice* (54) that Horace was an equestrian *iudex selectus*[2] at this period—interestingly, because the elder Horace had held these dignitaries up to him as models when he was a boy being educated at his father's expense in Rome:

> sive iubebat
> ut facerem quid, "habes auctorem quo facias hoc,"
> unum ex iudicibus selectis obiciebat. (*S.* 1.4.121–23)

Now, though according to Davus his behavior is not so exemplary, Horace belongs himself to the *album iudicum*.

Historians have tended to accept Taylor's argument; literary critics, reluctant to abandon the literal view of Horace's *mensa tenuis*, have tended to contradict or ignore it.[3] Taylor herself near the end of her life

[1] Lily Ross Taylor, "Horace's Equestrian Career," *AJP* 46 (1925) 161–70.

[2] On the *iudices selecti*, and how they were made up in Horace's day, and the distinction between *eques equo publico* and *eques selectorum* (Horace was both, but the greater title includes the lesser) see A. H. M. Jones, *Studies in Roman Government and Law* (Oxford 1960) 40–44; on the probability of Horace's having been one, Taylor (above, note 1) 162, note 1➡ "Republican and Augustan Writers Enrolled in the Equestrian Centuries," *TAPA* 99 (1968) 469–86, 478, note 15.

[3] There is no mention of Taylor's article or of Horace's equestrian rank in E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford 1957). N. Rudd, *Horace's Satires* (Cambridge 1966) 278, note 2, mentions the article and calls the rank "not certain, but probable"; he makes no use of it in interpretation. Compare Jaako Suolahti, *Junior Officers of the Roman Army*, Acad. Scient. Fennica, Annales 97 (1955) 83, who takes it for granted that Horace was equestrian already *before* his commission by Brutus and "was striving for a public career"; C. Nicolet, *L'Ordre équestre à l'époque républicaine* (Paris 1966) 2.914–15; Susan Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic* (Oxford 1969) 64–66; T. P. Wiseman, *New Men in the*

complained of this neglect,[4] perhaps especially because Eduard Fraenkel, in his very full review of Horace's life, passed over her interpretations in silence. She was entirely right, however; Horace was an *eques*, he enjoyed a comfortable living and a good position in life before he met Maecenas, and he never ceased to be proud of it. In fact, Horace mentions his equestrian status explicitly, not only in the passage on which Taylor relied, but in two passages of *Satires* 1.6 which she did not correctly understand (nor has any commentator so far). These passages put Horace's status as *eques* beyond question, even for the period c. 43–38 B.C., before his introduction to Maecenas' circle. They lead us to examine the evidence for his financial position that can be deduced from his purchase and tenure of the office of *scriba quaestorius* after Philippi, and from other hints in the Suetonian *vita* and the poems. With this evidence in hand, we can proceed to a clearer interpretation of some Horatian poems, especially *Satires* 1.6 and 2.7, than has previously been attempted.

I. *Horatius Eques*

The position of military tribune Horace held in Brutus' army in 43 and 42 normally entailed the rank of *eques* in addition, both in Republican times and under the Empire.[5] There is an amusing and touching monument to the pride with which one freedman contemporary of Horace and his father regarded his son's achievement of the military tribuneship and the attendant rank of *eques*—the monument of the military tribune L. Appuleius and his parents, discussed in Paul Zanker's study of the funerary reliefs of late Republican and early Imperial freedman.[6] Indeed, had Taylor ever seen this monument (*CIL* 14.3948,

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Roman Senate (Oxford 1971) 71–72; John H. D'Arms, *Commerce and Social Standing in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, Mass. 1982) 108–16. Historians even before Taylor tended to see Horace as more independent and self-assured than do literary critics: cf. B. G. Curtius, *Vorträge über römische Geschichte* (1832) 3.132–37. He thought Horace's father was an Italian and probably only in slavery because of the Social War—a conjecture repeated, and with good arguments especially concerning the enslavement of Venusian freemen in this war, by E. T. Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge 1967) 365, note 5, 369, note 4. Curtius also argued that Horace's education and resources made him much more independent of Augustus and Maecenas than was Vergil. Fraenkel notices this account to borrow a minor point (2, note 3), but his own chapter on the life of Horace is not in the same spirit. Scholars are still misled today by Fraenkel's attitude: cf. Additional Note below.

[4] Taylor 1968 (above, note 1), esp. 477–79.

[5] Suolahti (above, note 2) 55–57.

[6] Paul Zanker, "Grabreliefs römischer Freigelassener," *JDAI* 90 (1975) 267–315, a study very important for an understanding of Horace's background among late Republican freedmen of means, especially for its general and interpretative comments in conclusion (309–15). The relief mentioned here is his fig. 44, p. 305, discussed pp. 304–5.

Mentana), or a picture of it, she would have been delighted. Time has worn away the three faces, but the other details are clear. Below the left and right figures, a father and mother in Roman dress, are their names:

L · APPVLEIVS · L · L	APPVLEIA · L · L
ASCLEPIADES ·	SOPHANUBA

This means, of course, that both parents were *libertini* of the same man. Like many other freedmen of the late Republic, they flaunted on their monument with special pride their Roman dress and their status as legal married people (for as slaves they could only live in *contubernium*). Many freedmen also proudly display their children at right or left, frequently wearing the Roman *bulla* that they themselves had been denied as slave children. But here, exceptionally, and because of their son's high rank, Asclepiades and Sophanuba have made him the central figure, with themselves looking at him respectfully on each side:

L · APPVLEIVS · L · F ·
TR(*ibunus*) · MIL(*itum*) ·

He is in "heroic" soldierly costume, wearing the *paludamentum* on the shoulder of his bare torso, presenting a sword—displaying prominently on the fourth finger of his left hand, as he does so, a disproportionately oversized equestrian ring which, as Zanker conjectures, was most probably gilded on the monument for extra display. The monument is of Republican times; Zanker attributes it on grounds of style to 40–30 B.C., and Dessau noted that the younger, free-born Appuleius' not bearing a *cognomen* may point to the same period. There could be no more striking and poignant proof that a freedman's son, like Horace, who attained the rank of *tribunus militum* acquired with it that of *eques*—and would hardly be allowed by his delighted kinfolk to forget it.

Furthermore, the position of *scriba quaestorius* which Horace bought after obtaining pardon for having fought at Philippi, according to Suetonius' life, is itself mentioned explicitly by Cicero in a famous passage of the Verrines as giving otherwise qualified candidates an *entrée* to the equestrian order.[7] According to a recent study of the *apparitores*, of whom the *scribae* were the highest grade, inscriptional evidence shows *equites* among all their ranks, but the highest percentage by far (18%, nearly a fifth) among the *scribae*.[8] Nor, though they were debarred by custom (not law) from holding senatorial rank, were freedmen's sons in

[7] 2 *Verr.* 3.184, discussed e.g. by Wiseman (above, note 3) 73.

[8] N. Purcell, "The *Apparitores*: a Study in Social Mobility," *PBSR* 51, n.s. 38 (1983) 125–73, esp. 154–59.

any way forbidden the rank of *eques* in Horace's day, or apparently from earliest times, even by the strictest censors.[9]

Reluctance to interpret Davus' words of Horace himself, therefore, can only come from the prudery of critics, from Lambinus on, who did not want to take the disreputable slave literally in his declaration that Horace's private morals were the same as his own or worse.[10] There is, of course, a plausible cover for this reluctance. One could argue from the context that Davus is merely talking of a diatribe-figure, an imaginary opponent. But the context *as a whole* shows this to be impossible and so is worth quoting at length:

> quid, si *me* stultior ipso
> quingentis empto drachmis *deprenderis*? aufer
> me voltu terrere; manum stomachumque teneto,
> dum quae Crispini docuit me ianitor edo:
> *te* coniunx aliena capit, meretricula *Davum*.
> peccat uter nostrum cruce dignius? acris ubi *me*
> natura intendit, sub clara nuda lucerna
> quaecumque excepit turgentis verbera caudae,
> clunibus aut agitavit equum lasciva supinum,
> dimittit neque famosum neque sollicitum, ne
> ditior aut formae melioris meiat eodem;
> *tu* cum proiectis insignibus, anulo equestri
> Romanoque habitu, prodis ex iudice Dama,
> non es quod simulas? (*S.* 2.7.42–56)

These cannot be impersonal commonplaces of Stoic diatribe. Davus' comparison of himself and Horace began, and began angering Horace, *before* Davus identified it, attempting to turn away wrath, as the sort of thing he learned from a neighboring philosopher's slave. *Ego* and *tu*, Davus and Horace, occur both before and after the reference to Crispinus' doorkeeper. Why is either any more a "diatribe-figure" the second time than the first? Next, the passage quoted is preceded by an exactly similar unflattering comparison of Horace and his *scurra* Milvius, reported by Davus from Milvius' own mouth, and not as a diatribe-commonplace (29–42). Finally, if the Roman *eques* is imaginary and a commonplace of diatribe, Davus must refer to himself, Davus, *by name* as imaginary also: for the next line, after the promise to retail "Crispinus' janitor's" ideas, contrasts *tu* and *Davus* as the opposite poles of the coming discourse. One can see why Renaissance and Victorian schoolmasters wanted to save Horace's virtue in this passage and make the

[9] Treggiari (above, note 2) 64.

[10] "Non sunt autem haec ita accipienda, quasi Horatius significet, se equitem esse Romanum, sed eo dicuntur tantum, ut intelligamus, plerosque dominos servis suis esse deteriores et nequiores," Lambinus (1566) on *S.* 2.7.53, followed by many commentators, up to the latest edition of Kiessling-Heinze-Burck (on 2.7.43: "Erst mit v. 72 wendet sich der Vortrag wieder Horaz selbst zu"), as also by Rudd (above, note 3) 191–92, 195.

immoral knight imaginary, but it should have occurred to them that they were also undertaking the impossible task of saving Davus' virtue and making him imaginary as well.

Taylor, given the limits of scholarly discourse about such matters that applied in 1925, was of course admirably circumspect in attributing misbehavior to "Horace." We would nowadays rightly say that the misbehavior is attributed to his *persona*, and that only as seen by "Davus," an even purer creation of the poem.[11] *S.* 2.7 is good evidence, therefore, that Horace was an *eques* in real life; but hardly evidence for how Horace dressed on his actual evenings out, or that he actually had a slave named Davus. But now that we can discuss such passages as these more frankly, we can see, as should long ago have been seen, that part of the comedy comes from the brilliant *grossièreté* of the very first words of what Davus calls "philosophy." They are a pornographic description of Davus' own frank, raunchy sex life in the open light, finely contrasted with Horace's furtive one in the dark streets, down to clever wordplays (note the *clara* . . . *LUcerna* of Davus' prostitute and the *obscurante LAcerna* Horace wears). The details of this comic description are not commonplaces of the Stoic diatribe-sermon;[12] they are meant to be seen as highly personal reflections of Davus'. We are therefore even less likely to be talking about imaginary diatribe-personae in lines 46–52, and the last objection to Taylor's thesis disappears.[13]

We can now add the two passages from *S.* 1.6 mentioned above. Their force too in proving Horace an *eques*, not just in 30 B.C., but from the days of his service as military tribune with Brutus in 43–42 onward, cannot, once their true meaning is seen, be doubted or shaken. The first occurs in Horace's account of his introduction to Maecenas by Vergil and Varius:

> ut veni coram, singultim pauca locutus
> (infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari)
> non ego me *claro* natum *patre*, non ego circum
> me *Satureiano* vectari *rura caballo*,

[11] On the biographical "reality" of the *Satires* and the role played by the fictional persona of Horace in them, see J. E. G. Zetzel, "Horace's *Liber Sermonum*: The Structure of Ambiguity," *Arethusa* 13.1 (1980) 59–79, esp. 60–63.

[12] In spite of Lejay's effort to pretend that a Stoic would normally have gone as far as Davus does in λέγειν τὰ σῦκα σῦκα: see his introduction to this satire, *Horace: Satires* (Paris 1911) 548–49. Keissling-Heinze say more reasonably (on 2.7.43) "erst von v. 72 an wird das Thema tiefer und im eigentlich philosophischen Sinne angefasst." Cf. also Gilbert Highet, "Libertino Patre Natus," *AJP* 94 (1973) 268–81, esp. 272–76 (= *The Classical Papers of Gilbert Highet* [New York 1983] 169–72).

[13] Taylor also discussed the possibility that Horace's watching the *ludi* with Maecenas, i.e. from the equestrian seats (*S.* 2.6.48) is evidence of his rank (Taylor 1925 [above, note 1] 163, cf. Taylor 1968 [above, note 2] 478).

> sed quod eram narro: respondes, ut tuus est mos,
> pauca. . . . (58–61)

Horace's introduction to Maecenas clearly took place at Maecenas' morning levée, as the brevity and formality of the conversation indicate: and at the morning levée togas were worn. Now, the three features Horace denied he possessed—a *clarus pater*, *rura* broad enough to ride round, and a *caballus* to ride round them on—are the same three things he himself uses at *AP* 248 to paraphrase *eques Romanus*:

> offenduntur enim, quibus est *equus*[14] *et pater et res*.

Horace therefore told Maecenas something about his equestrian status. One might suppose at first that Horace told Maecenas he was not an *eques*, but this is not possible. His toga would itself have told Maecenas at a levée whether he was or not.[15] Horace is rather explaining himself as a low-ranking, however genuine, member of the *ordo equester*. If Horace told Maecenas as frankly "what he was" as he tells the reader of the satire, he told him that he was not a freeborn and wealthy man's son with landed property near Tarentum and a horse of the region, on which to ride round it—the ideal situation for a member of the *secundus ordo* born as he was in Apulia or Lucania—but a freedman's son, *libertino patre natus* (1.6.6, 45, 46), a refrain liable to be sung after him in the streets[16] if he aspired too high. His father was not rich in land—*macro pauper agello* (71)—and these lands were lost after Philippi (*E.* 2.2.51f.). However, he said (and he repeats for the readers of this poem), he was entitled to the rank of *eques* both as an ex-tribune of a legion (48) and as the possessor of the comfortable independence and leisure of a *scriba quaestorius* described at 110–31. That seems much the most plausible interpretation of the passage: Horace was obliged by Maecenas' very first remark to him to account with some stammering (*infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari*) for his equestrian dress, and explained that he was not some country nobleman's son with lands and a *caballus*, but—what he was.

[14] The *eques Romanus* is not elsewhere than in *S.* 1.6 referred to humorously by a paraphrase with *caballus* or (see below) *mulus*, but Horace's paraphrase in the *AP* with *equus* is obvious, inevitable, and suggested by such common Latin phrases as *eques Romanus equo publico*, *equites peditesque*, *equo merere*. Cf. Martial's *quod non vis equiti, vis dare, praetor, equo* (4.67.8), and his epigram on the two brothers who could only make up one equestrian census between them: *uno credis equo posse sedere duos?* (5.38.4).

[15] *Equites* who meant to stand for senatorial office wore the *latus clavus* until Augustus forbade the practice, probably in 18 B.C.: see R. J. A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton 1984) 11–15 on this measure and its later fate. As Horace meant *not* to do so, he no doubt wore the narrow stripe.

[16] Gilbert Highet (above, note 12) speculates (268) that the rhythm is trochaic-accentual; the repetition at 45–46 and of *parente natus* (7f.), *patre natus* (20, 29, 36, 45, 46; *natum patre* 58) certainly suggests a chant or catch-phrase of the streets.

Horace refers to his equestrian status in the same way, and with a similar paraphrase-joke, later in the satire. He claims he could easily collect, had he the right ancestry, the additional wealth and influence to be some sort of a senator (which renders his possession of the equestrian *census* beyond doubt)[17] but does not want to:

> nam mihi continuo maior quaerenda foret res
> atque salutandi plures; ducendus et unus
> et comes alter, uti ne solus rusve peregreve
> exirem, plures calones atque caballi
> pascendi, ducenda petorrita. nunc mihi *curto*
> ire licet *mulo* vel si libet usque Tarentum,
> mantica cui lumbos onere ulceret atque *eques* armos:
> obiciet nemo sordes mihi, quas tibi, Tilli,
> cum Tiburte via *praetorem* quinque sequuntur
> te pueri, lasanum portantes oenophorumque;
> hoc ego commodius quam tu, praeclare *senator*,
> milibus atque aliis vivo. (100–111)

Nunc: "as things are," a favorite Horatian use of the particle.[18] As an *eques*, Horace need not live up in public to the pretensions of a *senator*[19] like Tillius, no better born than himself, who is *praetor* and (sarcastically) *praeclarus*. *Eques* at 106 is always translated "rider"; but surely one sees the same joke here as about the *caballus* earlier, the minute it is pointed out—an excellent joke, though missed for so long. Senators need, among other things, *caballi* to be respectable when they travel, just as Horace needed (one) *caballus* at 59 to be a respectable knight. But since the behavior of *equites* is not the subject of so much public comment as that of senators, Horace is perfectly safe from criticism as an *eques* traveling not on an *equus*, or even a *caballus*, but on a *mulus*—and that a gelded one, *curtus*. The point is further driven home by the contrast of status words: Tillius, a freedman's son who has insisted on standing for the senate, is now a *praetor* (108) and a *praeclarus*, a more than *clarus*, *senator* (110) and so his "relative deprivation" brings him nothing but scorn.

Seneca retails to Lucilius (*Ep.* 87) the story that the elder Cato did not disdain to travel in exactly the same manner as Horace claims to—

[17] The senatorial and equestrian census at the time of Satires 1 were both set at *HS* 400,000 (cf. note 19 below), but no doubt Horace is referring to the expenses of the election and of canvassing as an additional burden for which more would be needed.

[18] For *nunc* as Greek νῦν δέ = "*nun aber*, as things are" cf. e.g. J. E. B. Mayor on Juvenal 5.141, Krebs-Schmalz, *Antibarbarus der Lateinsprache* (repr. 1962[8]) 2.179 (both with examples and further references).

[19] Under the Republic, from at least the time of the Second Punic War, the census for a senator was *HS* 400,000, the same as for an *eques*. Augustus raised it to *HS* 1,000,000 for senators, probably in 18 B.C., cf. Talbert (above, note 15) 10–11, and the longer discussion → C. Nicolet, "Le Cens senatorial sous la république et sous Auguste," *JRS* 66 (1976) 20–38.

so exactly, that the passages may even draw on a common source. Seneca has been traveling cheaply, he says, with his friend Caesonius Maximus, and is ashamed of himself because he finds it humiliating, philosopher or not, to make so poor and contemptible a figure, a senator traveling in public with half-dead mules and a shoeless muleteer; but after all:

> quid ad rem pertinent mulae saginatae unius omnes coloris, quid ista vehicula caelata? . . . ista nec dominum meliorem faciunt nec mulam. M. Cato censorius . . . *cantherio* vehebatur et hippoperis quidem impositis, ut secum utilia portaret. O quam cuperem illi nunc occurrere aliquem ex his trossulis, in via divitibus, cursores et Numidas et multum ante se pulveris agentem! . . . O quantum erat saeculi decus imperatorem, triumphalem, censorium, quod super omnia haec est, Catonem, uno *caballo* esse contentum et ne toto quidem: partem enim sarcinae ab utroque latere dependentes occupabant. ita non omnibus obesis mannis et asturconibus et tolutariis praeferres unicum illum *equum* ab ipso Catone defrictum? video non futurum finem in ista materia ullum, nisi quem ipse mihi fecero . . . (87.8–11)

It is striking how many of the same features appear here as in Horace's passage. The *trossuli in via divites*, the "troopers of fashion rich only for show on the road," are obvious contrasts, like Tillius, to the rider's simplicity; on the other side, both simple riders' titles to status are mentioned: Horace's status as *eques* in contrast with the pretentious *praetor* of no better birth than his own, Cato's as *imperator*, *triumphalis*, *censorius*, and—in a Senecan rhetorical "climax"—Cato himself. Neither is compelled to travel this way; both choose to. Cato's *hippoperae*, his horse-wallets, and Horace's *mantica* are equally modest luggage. Both ride geldings (*cantherius*, *mulus curtus*) and both ride without saddles (Horace *onere ulceret* his mount, whereas Cato's is *ab ipso Catone defrictum*). Also, Seneca makes clear that this tableau, Cato riding alone with his pack, is a *topos* on which he could, as a rhetorician, easily expand further; it is most probably, then, a rhetorical school-commonplace much older than himself.[20]

In 35 B.C., then, Horace was a Roman *eques* with the proper census, or indeed more—enough to aspire to the senate (and at thirty he was just reaching the legal age to do so), if his birth had made that appropriate, and had he wanted the criticism and expense the election and the consequent status involved. Whatever it had cost him to fight

[20] On the requirements of the average Roman senator for travel in public, besides the Seneca passage, cf. the inscription of Sagalassus in Pisidia, early in Tiberius' reign, which assumes that any traveling *senator populi Romani* may need to requisition up to ten wagons—as many as were allowed the Imperial procurator himself; *equites* may have three, centurions o → Stephen Mitchell, "Requisitioned Transport in the Roman Empire: A New Inscription from Pisidia," *JRS* 66 (1976) 106–31; Talbert (above, note 15) 76.

on Brutus' side had been partly recovered between Philippi and the time he met Maecenas in 38 or 37; and if we say "partly" recovered, the status he gives himself in *S.* 1.6 reminds us that his, and his father's, undamaged fortune before Philippi must have been ample indeed. This must have been by means of the government position he bought after obtaining pardon, and we are at liberty to believe he is both foreshortening the story and exaggerating his "poverty" humorously when he tells Florus at *E.* 2.2.49–52:

> unde *simul* primum me dimisere Philippi,
> decisis humilem pennis, inopemque paterni
> et laris et fundi paupertas impulit audax
> ut versus facerem.

For certainly Horace did not restore his fortunes by verse only: he had first restored them to the degree he describes in *S.* 1.6, by making himself a *scriba*.[21]

II. *Horatius Scriba*

Bello Philippensi excitus a M. Bruto imperatore tribunus militum meruit, says Suetonius' life (emphasizing by this phraseology the legitimacy of the appointment) and goes on *victisque partibus venia impetrata scriptum quaestorium comparavit*. This implies that he bought the position (with the help, no doubt, of the same sort of influential, aristocratic schoolfriends as had earlier got him his appointment from Brutus and, after Philippi, his pardon) as soon as possible after Philippi, probably in 41. Horace is therefore describing in *Satires* 1.6 his status in life as it was when he met Maecenas, a comfortable one. That is the second point by which Horace hopes to represent himself as a creditable companion for Maecenas: his possession of a gentlemanly and leisurely living of his own, which makes him no mere *scurra* to Maecenas for lands, money, or favors (a point Horace emphasized twice more after receiving the Sabine Farm, *Satires* 2.6.1–5 and especially *Epodes* 1.23–24). His position as *scriba* had made him independent already.

Fraenkel rightly complains that "In more than one book on Horace it is said that he became 'a clerk in the Treasury.' That may do as a rough translation of *scriba quaestorius*, but it hardly gives the modern reader an adequate idea of the nature of the office and of the social position of its occupants. . . . " Horace's father became a very rich man at the bottom of a scale of public officers paid to work on commission, of which the *scribae* of the Roman magistrates were at the very top. They were permanent officials with a life salary, and were paid a commission for the business they transacted and recorded for the treasury,

[21] As Fraenkel argued at some length (above, note 3) 13–15.

but since the *aerarium* was also a record office, they had other equally important duties to discharge. They recorded resolutions of the senate and kept records of them. If an interested party wanted access to official documents, the *scribae* had to produce them and make authentic copies. This made them in many transactions more influential than the magistrates they served; Cicero sarcastically claimed that *eae leges sunt, quas apparitores nostri volunt* (*Leg.* 3.46, cf. 48). The position was obtained by recommendation and purchased for life.[22] and the *scribae*, like the other *apparitores*, thus bore the same relation to the annually elected officials they served as permanent civil servants nowadays do to appointed ones, except that their theoretical supervisors were in office more briefly.

There were (apparently) thirty-six *scribae quaestorii*, divided into three *decuriae*. The living to be made from the office proper was evidently so good that each of these *decuriae*, apparently, was *allowed* to serve in Rome only one year of every three,[23] but there was lucrative work to be done in off years in the provinces for the promagistrates' quaestors also, if a scribe wanted it.[24] The position therefore offered every opportunity for as much profitable business and legal work, or as much literary leisure, as its holder happened to want. Appointment as *apparitor* at any level to the central government in Rome, and especially the scribeship, the top grade, was much sought after by literary people in particular for this very reason.[25]

Any yet in the same breath Fraenkel says: "The poet's economic circumstances *changed completely* (italics mine) when, at some time before 31 B.C.. presumably not long after the publication of the first book of his *Satires*, Maecenas presented him with the Sabine farm which was to mean so much to him. It is likely that, in consequence of this change, he resigned his post as *scriba*, or at any rate ceased to

[22] Purchase of the scribeship appears, from Cicero 2 *Verr.* 3.184 and other evidence (collected by Mommsen, *Staatsrecht* I³, 343), to have been the rule; of course some sort of recommendation and patronage must have been a necessity also, and probably lay in the first instance with the current magistrates whom the scribes were to serve. Cicero made his freedman M. Tullius a scribe, or got him made one, so he would have an absolutely trustworthy accountant for his government in Cilicia. Tullius undoubtedly received this office for life, like the others: see Treggiari (above, note 2) 258–59. Cf. Purcell (above, note 8) 138–39, who emphasizes the necessity of nomination but doubts the regularity of purchase; but if Cicero can say the scribeship is a regular means by which bad men *qui nummulis corrogatis . . . cum decuriam emerunt, ex primo ordine explosorum in secundum ordinem civitatis se venisse dicunt*, its purchase must at least have been both common and legal.

[23] A. H. M. Jones, *Studies in Roman Government and Law* (Oxford 1960) 154–55, esp. 155, note 6, shows that this was true of the *praecones* and *viatores* attached to the scribal decuries, and concludes that it was true of the three decuries themselves.

[24] Some significant examples of Roman scribes profiting in this fashion in the provinces are collected and discussed by Purcell (above, note 8) 160.

[25] See Purcell (above, note 8) section V, "The *Apparitores* and Roman Literary Life," 142–46.

spend much trouble on it; he could now be expected to attend a meeting of the corporation only when some extraordinary matter was under discussion."[26]

In fact there seems to be clear evidence in *Epistles* 1.7 that Horace still held this post at the time of the publication of *Epistles* 1 in 20 B.C. In that poem Horace accuses Maecenas of thinking that he is no longer capable of resigning the Sabine farm and returning to active life, and consequently is compelled to wait on his patron whenever he is wanted. That, says Horace, is like the fable of the fox in the granary, who made himself too fat to leave by the same crack in the wall he came in. He then goes on to tell an allegory—a very thinly veiled one—of himself and Maecenas. Volteius Mena was a *praeco*, a person, therefore, of the same rank exactly as Horace's father, the *coactor argentarius*; a rank which Horace says the elder Horace would not have been disappointed to see his son attain also, for all his expensive education:

> nec timuit, sibi ne vitio quis verteret, olim
> si *praeco* parvas aut, ut fuit ipse, *coactor*
> mercedes sequerer: neque ego essem questus; at hoc nunc
> laus illi debetur et a me gratia maior (*S.* 1.6.85–88)

—*hoc* meaning, evidently, the much higher status than his father's, the rank of equestrian *scriba*, that Horace had attained before he met Maecenas or was given the Sabine Farm.

Volteius, the Horace-figure of the parable, is approached by a nobleman looking to amuse himself with the follies of the humble—L. Marcius Philippus, consul in 91 B.C., whose son became Augustus' stepfather, the Maecenas-figure of the parable. He is invited to dinner,

[26] Fraenkel (above, note 3) 14–15. A similar ambiguity about Horace's position is shown → Charles Brewster Randolph, "Horace and the *Scriptus Quaestorius*," *TAPA* 56 (1925) 130–49. He calls the position "a responsible undersecretaryship, comparable in a measure to the post of an assistant secretary in one of our governmental departments at Washington, like that of State or War" (143); but assumes three pages later that Horace resigned his post with embarrassment as soon as he could ("his work as a quaestor's clerk," 146). Either the scribeship, one would think, was "like" being an undersecretary for Harding or Coolidge, which would hardly have excluded one from upper-class social life in 1925, or it wasn't. Actually, it was a post perfectly creditable to wealthy freedmen, to their sons, and to the less well-born *equites* in general. Several are known to have gone on to the senate, and others to have married into senatorial families (like the Emperor Vespasian's father-in-law, Suet. *Vesp.* 3). But probably the scribeship had to be laid down to serve in the senate, and snobs could criticize such a beginning to the career of even a freeborn senator. The evidence is discussed by Wiseman (above, note 3) 71–73. If Horace was embarrassed by the post, however, as (e.g.) Wiseman argues Romans were embarrassed—or pretended to be—in society by salaried positions of any kind (73–77), he would hardly parade it at *Satires* 2.6.36–37. Of course (see below) Horace also parades his freedom from its daily obligations as he does so; which probably was more than enough to satisfy the requirements of Roman snobbery about wages.

made a friend of, and at last subsidized in the purchase of—a Sabine farm. It turns out, however, that this is too much trouble to manage, and Volteius, as the poem ends, is begging off the gift:

> te per Genium dextramque deosque Penatis
> obsecro et obtestor, *vitae me redde priori*! (1.7.94–95)

—that is, to his life and calling as *praeco*. Horace adds:

> qui semel aspexit, quantum dimissa petitis
> praestent, mature redeat repetatque relicta.
> metiri se quemque suo modulo ac pede verum est. (96–98)

What does Horace have, then, that was *dimissum* and *relictum*, to which he can return? What does he have that would be more like his origins, and, taken up again, would make him feel that he was measuring himself *suo modulo* instead of by Maecenas' standards? Surely he means his life-position as *scriba*, a pinnacle of ambition, certainly, for the *praecones* and *coactores* among whom he was born and brought up as a child, but work of the same kind in the end. If Horace protests his fondness for *otium* and country-life as a reason for giving up the Sabine Farm, if it entails attending Maecenas, and returning to his *vita prior*, that is no barrier to this interpretation either. Horace had already represented himself fifteen years before, still a scribe and ungifted as yet with the Sabine Farm, as a gentleman of equestrian leisure, *otia liberrima* (*S.* 1.6.111–28).

Horace therefore certainly, or almost certainly, kept his *scriptus quaestorius* (and why not?) as a fall-back option until 20 B.C. Whether he kept it to the end of his life is less clear, though at the time of the epistle to Florus, probably one of his latest poems, he was still an important enough businessman to be called on frequently for his *sponsum* when he visited Rome (*E.* 2.2.67). But we know of nothing that would have made Horace resign the wages and perquisites of a place he owned outright,[27] and the sale of this office evidently did not bring in its value; the one account we have suggests that only a desperate man would sell just for the money.[28] Augustus offered the secretaryship of

[27] On how excellent these wages and perquisites could be, aside from the business work, on which a commission was earned, cf. Purcell (above, note 8) 138. We lack precise figures for scribal salaries at Rome, but the duumviral scribes at Caesar's colony at Urso made *HS* 1200 per quarter—3 to 4 times the salary of centurions before Caesar and Augustus raised their pay (Wiseman [above, note 3] 72, 74). The salary paid to the scribes of the central government was no doubt considerably higher (cf. following note).

[28] According to the scholiast on Juvenal 5.3, the *scurra* Sarmentus, a freedman, a favorite of Maecenas, and an acquaintance of Horace (*S.* 1.5.52–70), obtained the quaestorian scribeship. He was booed by the audience, lampooned, and later prosecuted for immediately presuming to wear equestrian dress and sit in the equestrian seats in the theatres (significant, that he was encouraged to do so merely by obtaining the position). He

his private correspondence to Horace, a position higher in rank and recompense, which would indeed have entailed his resigning, or rather selling, the *scriptus*.[29] But Horace did not take it. Even then, Augustus insisted on advancing Horace in wealth and status. The Suetonius life says *unaque et altera liberalitate locupletavit*, and one of these *liberalitates* was probably the house at Horace's beloved Tibur that Suetonius saw.[30] But why should Horace have abandoned the *scriptus* and its income—especially since he was hardly liable, as an imperial favorite, to any of its duties that interrupted his studies and his equestrian *otium*?

III. Horace's Social Status in *Satires* 1.6 and 2.7

These points help us understand the poetry and structure of *Satires* 1.6. In that poem nearly every degree on the ladder of Roman ranks from centurion to *imperator*, from slave to censor and patrician, is mentioned, and they all help illuminate Horace's self-positioning not just on this ladder but in life.

Horace opens by describing Maecenas as at the top of the ladder, where one could only be by high birth:

> Non quia, Maecenas, Lydorum quidquid Etruscos
> incoluit finis, nemo generosior est te,
> nec quod *avus tibi maternus fuit atque paternus*
> olim qui magnis legionibus imperitarent . . . (1–4)

From the beginning, birth, rank, status, and *ambitio* are themes, *the* themes, of this poem. For example, the last lines of 1.6 echo the first, verbally:

> his me consolor victurum suavius ac si
> *quaestor avus pater atque meus patruusque* fuissent. (131–32)

James Gow thought, following P. Willems, that the occasion of the poem is Maecenas' asking Horace whether he would like to leave his scribeship and be supported for the first rank of the senate, the quaes-

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escaped punishment by Maecenas' influence. Later in life, finding himself bankrupt (*auctionari coactus*) Sarmentus was asked *cur scriptum censorium* (to which he had presumably moved by exchange) *quoque venderet*, and replied "that he had a good memory," *se bonae memoriae esse*. The *quoque* shows it was considered a strange thing to sell the position. Trimalchio claimed that he might have been a scribe, if he had liked—just as Horace claims he might no less than Maecenas have been a senator; cf. D'Arms (above, note 3) 108–16.

[29] This of course was not like the position of *ab epistulis* either in its Julio-Claudian version, as a post for the great imperial freedmen, or its later equestrian one. On the origins (after Augustus) of the position of imperial *ab epistulis*, cf. Fergus Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (Oxford 1977) 73.

[30] *Domusque ostenditur circa Tiburni luculum*; Rostagni ad loc., *Suetonio de Poetis* (Turin 1944) 120.

torship.[31] We all know nowadays there are other reasons a poem like this could be written and published than as the result of an actual request in real life. But as an imaginary situation between Horace and Maecenas, why not? Horace considers, in the poem, what happens to freedmen's sons who do become quaestors or tribunes (24–44); he believes himself financially prosperous enough to undertake this, if he had the ancestry (100–105); he concludes by imagining for a moment, picturesquely, what it would be like, not just to be a marginal, low-ranking senator but to have a whole family of these.[32] Even that for one like himself would be a dream-world of high birth, Horace humorously implies, in a piquant contrast to Maecenas' true noble birth as described at the outset.

A second thought suggested at the outset by the opening lines: while many different interpretations have been given of the words

> quem rodunt omnes libertino patre natum . . .
> quod mihi pareret legio Romana *tribuno* (46–48)

—that Horace is being pompous and calling his tribuneship the command of a whole legion,[33] or even more wildly that Brutus' troops at Philippi must have lost their legates and had literally to be commanded by the *tribuni*[34]—surely the true interpretation is obvious. Line 48 is intentionally contrasted with line 4, just as Horace's unattainable dream of a family of—quaestors!—at the end is humorously contrasted with Maecenas' brilliant heritage, and says nothing more than that while Maecenas' ancestors were *imperatores* over many legions at once—Etruscan legions, not Roman ones, however—Horac was mocked in public merely for being obeyed by a single *Roman* (his critics use *Romana* emphatically and indignantly) legion, if only as one of its tribunes, because he was a freedman's son.

If we can get this far in solving minor puzzles of emphasis by stressing rank as a theme, then it is worthwhile to look further. Maecenas, Horace continues, even with such a heritage as his, does not scorn a man merely because his father was a nobody or even a freedman (6). Two more points here: as Lejay saw, that means that Horace is acquiescing, not just tacitly but explicitly, in the social prejudice that led both Augustus and Maecenas to exclude freedmen, like his father, from

[31] James Gow, *Q. Horati Flacci Saturarum Liber I* (Cambridge 1901) 79. Willems noted in addition that Horace, being about 30 at the time of *Satires* 1, was just arriving at the legal age to stand for the quaestorship.

[32] Like the examples discussed in Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford 1939) 78–96, "Caesar's New Senators," especially 81, note 1, of families limited to the *homo novus parvusque senator* (*Bell. Afr.* 57.4).

[33] Gow (above, note 31) xi, note 4.

[34] Fraenkel (above, note 3) 11, note 4.

their tables.[35] It also means that Horace is saying his own class, the *libertinorum filii*, deserves their friendship. In the next lines, Horace implies that Maecenas' fairness to freedmen's sons extends even to approving of them as senators:

> cum referre negas, quali sit quisque parente
> natus, dum ingenuus, persuades hoc tibi vere,
> ante potestatem Tulli atque ignobile regnum
> multos saepe viros nullis maioribus ortos
> et vixisse probos, amplis et honoribus auctos. (7–11)

Maecenas has no disdain for freedmen's sons; and he argues that many low-born men from the beginning of Roman history, even before Servius, have been *honoribus aucti*. King Servius Tullius was *patre nullo, matre serva*, Livy 4.3.10–12 (where Canuleius is arguing, in fact, for exactly this point: still earlier kings than Servius, Numa, and the elder Tarquin were also of birth that would have disqualified them for high office by Republican standards). Contrariwise, Maecenas is made to argue, sons of the noblest families—even patricians—have been refused the senator's toga by the *populus*, because they were too patently unworthy (12–16).

Then what is the subject of the poem, if not whether Horace is a proper person to stand for *honores*, for the senate? Even from a political point of view, one can see why this would have been a good thing for Horace to give out as Maecenas' view. The last censorship, that of Appius Claudius in 50 B.C., who had ejected all freedmen's sons from the senate, had been intensely unpopular,[36] and the mid-thirties was no time for Maecenas and Octavian to claim that they intended to purge the senate of the low-born. It was a time of confusion when, Dio Cassius says, there were sixty-seven praetors in one year; not just freed-

[35] Lejay compares Suetonius *Augustus* 74:

> convivabatur assidue, non sine magno ordinum hominumque dilectu. Valerius Messala tradidit, neminem umquam libertinorum adhibitum ab eo cenae excepto Mena, sed asserto in ingenuitatem post proditam Sexti Pompei classem. ipse scribit, invitasse se quendam, in cuius villa maneret, qui speculator suus olim fuisset.

If that is as far as Augustus' snobbery and *ordinum dilectus* went, he and Maecenas, as described in Horace, had much the same policy.

[36] Dio claims that both censors of 50 helped Caesar, the Pompeian Appius no less than the Caesarian Piso:

> Claudius meant to oppose Caesar, for he favored Pompey's party, but unintentionally aided him greatly instead; for he struck very many senators and knights from the rolls, and made them all favor Caesar as a result. Piso . . . did no such thing, but did not oppose him when he expelled all freedmen's sons and many of quite noble birth . . . from the Senate. (40.63.4)

men's sons, of whom Julius Caesar had already admitted as a popular gesture a select few, but actual freedmen were put up for the senate and elected; indeed, a slave still legally in ownership was found to have become praetor and executed for it.[37] If Octavian and Maecenas were concerned to maintain their popularity in Italy at this period, what more probable than that they would like to have it thought that they were no threat to the social ambitions of the freedman class?

On the other hand, Horace refuses in terms that make it clear that he thinks equestrian rank is suitable for a person of his birth, but not senatorial rank, in which one might merely be marginally safe from the censors, and a butt of mockery as well. "In theory," Syme says, "every free-born citizen was eligible to stand for the quaestorship: in fact, the wealth and standing of a knight was requisite—no exorbitant condition. Sons of freedmen had sat in the Senate before now, furtive and insecure, under the menace of expulsion by implacable censors; the scribe likewise might well be in possession of the census of a Roman knight. . . . "[38] That essentially sums up Horace's situation and explains his reply.

> quid oportet
> nos facere a volgo longe longeque remotos?
> namque esto, populus Laevino mallet honores
> quam Decio mandare novo, censorque moveret
> Appius, ingenuo si non essem patre natus;
> vel merito, quoniam in propria non pelle quiessem;
> sed fulgente trahit constrictos Gloria curru
> non minus ignotos generosis. (17–24)

If these lines figure in the context of Maecenas' suggesting that senatorial rank would be all right for Horace, and Horace's refusal to accept the suggestion, choosing between the various ambiguities the Latin suggests is not crucial. The basic meaning seems to be, "what should I do" (or, since Maecenas is also a knight who cares nothing for senatorial rank for himself, "what should *we* do"; it hardly matters, and perhaps both meanings are intended) "who am far above the common people/who have nothing to do with the *populus* in politics? For suppose your reasoning is false[39] and that the people might in fact elect even a

[37] Dio 48.43 (38 B.C.) (the 67 praetors); 48.53 (continual successions of not only consuls and praetors but quaestors, some for only a day); 48.34 and 42 (freedmen's sons and slaves in the senate). These passages are much discussed: cf. P. Willems, *Le Sénat de la république romaine* (Louvain/Paris 1878–85) 1.613–14; Syme (above, note 32) 196–97, 244–45; Treggiari (above, note 3) 61f.

[38] Syme (above, note 32) 78.

[39] For a survey of interpretations of *esto*, cf. Gow (above, note 31) 83–84 (Orelli, Palmer, Lendrum [*CR* 4 (1890) 253f.], Kiessling): most of these, like Kiessling-Heinze-Burck, assume that *esto mallet* offers in one way or another the opposite supposition to Maecenas', whether as a certainty or just as a risk Horace would still run: Maecenas thinks Horace might have the luck to succeed, Horace thinks he probably would not. Gow sup-

Laevinus rather than a new Decius (i.e. the case you propose wouldn't happen, and I would fail in my bid), or a censor like Appius[40] might eject me, once elected, because my father was a freedman—rightly, perhaps, because I was in false clothing—yet ambition draws the ignoble as well as the well-born to stand for the senate" (i.e. plenty of freedmen's sons do the same thing). Or (given the ambiguity Horace has purposely created by the clipped use of conjunctions in the passage): "Let us forget such thoughts; the people would rather elect a Laevinus than a new Decius (if I ran), and (if I won) a censor like Appius would eject me. But one sees freedmen's sons drawn to the senate by ambition anyway." These, I suppose, would be the poles of possible interpretation. Either or both—and perhaps both are intended, since they can both reasonably be got from the Latin—make good sense. There are other ways of filling the semantic gaps Horace leaves here, none of which makes that much difference, falling as they do in between.[41]

What *is* important to interpretation is that the figure now conjured up, Tillius, is no mere Lucilian fiction, but an *alter ego* of Horace—another freedman's son, like Horace himself, who has run for the senate and won, and gotten only *invidia* and ridicule for his new status:

> quo tibi, Tilli,
> sumere depositum clavum fierique tribuno?
> invidia adcrevit, privato quae minor esset;
> nam ut quisque insanus nigris medium impediit crus
> pellibus et latum demisit pectore clavum,
> audit continuo: "quis homo hic est? quo patre natus?" (24–29)

That is the same song Horace heard when he threatened, by being a *tribunus militum*, to start a senatorial career.[42]

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poses that *esto* must concede Maecenas his point, and Horace would then argue onward from the concession: "I grant you that, but the people might still *prefer* a Laevinus, and the censor Appius might eject me . . . "

[40] There is another ambiguity here. Appius' ancestor Ap. Claudius Caecus as censor in 312 had done just the opposite thing—allowed freedmen's sons into the senate against opposition (Livy 8.46.10–11)—and to call the Appius of 50 merely *censor* . . . *Appius* is to remind the reader of the contrast. The obvious ambiguity occasionally deceived an editor (in times when ambiguity was unwelcome) into supposing that *only* the earlier Appius could be meant: cf. Palmer on *S.* 1.6.21.

[41] On any interpretation, the passage involves an assumption that Horace could possibly get past the people, snobs though they are, and be elected in spite of their preference for noble fools like Laevinus; or how would the censor Appius have the chance to eject him from the senate, deservedly or not? That makes a good parallel with Tillius' case in the following lines: Tillius is overwhelmed with contempt, but after his election.

[42] Even Fraenkel, evidently, admitted that Horace must have intended a senatorial career in his youth, when he became *tribunus militum*, just by virtue of becoming one ([above, note 3] 10, note 7; after Philippi "there could be no longer any idea of his making a career in the magistracy," 13).

The ancient scholiasts invent a Tillius, brother of the conspirator against Caesar Tillius Cimber, who was supposedly ejected from the senate and began his career again either in the senate or as *tribunus militum laticlavius*. This imposed on Mommsen and others, but was finally disproved by Taylor, Fraenkel, and T. P. Wiseman.[43] Why would such a man, an aristocratic Republican of equal birth with Casca or Ligarius, be asked with sarcasm who his father was or who he himself was? Tillius is a freedman's son; the *depositum clavum* is the purple-bordered toga free-born boys wore before they put on the *toga virilis*; and the tribuneship is the tribuneship of the plebs—at this period the only alternative to the quaestorship as the first rank in the senatorial *cursus honorum*.[44] A freedman's son who promises pompously to watch over the citizens and their empire, over Italy and the temples of the gods, is not just risking but demanding that his parentage be looked into (34–37), and so Tillius is asked how he dares exercise the tribune's authority over Romans, when he is the son of "some Syrian Dama or Dionysius" (38f.).

This passage is often treated as if it were a "Lucilian" interlude, as if it could be understood apart from what Horace says about himself; as for example by Fraenkel:[45]

> It is with a sigh of relief that we greet the announcement (45) *nunc ad me redeo libertino patre natum*, by which we are assured that now the parade of dreary characters is over and that we shall at last be allowed to enjoy the company of a far more interesting and pleasant man, Q. Horatius Flaccus. . . . He himself seems glad to get out of the Lucilian masquerade. . . .

But the irrelevancy is simply not there. Horace never left the stage. Tillius *is* Horace, suffering as Horace might if he took Maecenas' well-meant advice. We are expected, after all, to have read *S.* 1.4.105–37, as we progress through the unified sequence of poems that make up *Satires* 1. Tillius is one of those deterrent examples Horace's father taught him to

[43] Fraenkel (above, note 3) 102, note 6; Wiseman (above, note 3) 266, following Taylor 1925 (above, note 1) 168–69. See also Lejay's very firm rejection of the identification with either the conspirator or his brother, *Satires* 172–73, and on 1.6.24; I notice that this still needs to be set straight in Richard A. LaFleur's otherwise excellent survey of personal names in the *Satires*, "Horace and the Law of Satire," *ANRW* 2.31.3, 1790–1826 (see page 1802). Is Wiseman right to make "Tillius" a real person (was he perhaps a freedman of the Tillii to whom Caesar's assassin belonged?), or might "Tillius" rather belong with "Novius" and "Barrus" as mere conventional Lucilian names for satire-figures?

[44] One normally held the quaestorship before being tribune (Mommsen, *Staatsrecht* 1^3, 551) but the counter-examples are mostly from this disturbed period (42–31 B.C.), cf. *RE* "Tribunus Plebis" col. 2489. Perhaps Tillius skipped a rank in his eagerness for a career; or perhaps we are meant to deduce that he was, when the things described occurred, already at the second stage of his *cursus honorum*—just as later in the poem we are to deduce that at its dramatic date Tillius had already advanced to praetor.

[45] Fraenkel (above, note 3) 103.

look for, and Horace says of him too, *numquid ego illi / imprudens faciam simile?* (1.4.136–37). Tillius dressed up imprudently, as Horace might be tempted to by Maecenas' indulgence, in literally the wrong skins, the senator's sandal-thongs (*pelle*, 22; *pellibus*, 28) and is ridiculed for it. Most significantly, and most unfairly, he turns out to be, in the language of popular abuse, *Syri Damae aut Dionysi filius*: that is their answer to the sing-song question he and Horace both know so well, *quo patre natus?*

Horace's *nunc ad* me *redeo* deceived Fraenkel. That is not the most dramatic transition in the poem. It is interesting and striking to turn back to the real, modest, equestrian Horace from his ambitious and ridiculous *alter ego* Tillius. But the character really waiting to be introduced is Horace's own father, whom so many words in the opening passage adumbrate:

> avus tibi maternus atque *paternus* (3)
> ignotos, ut me *libertino patre* natum (6)
> cum referre negas *quali* sit quisque *parente natus* (7–8)
> *ingenuo* si non essem *patre* natus (21)
> "quis homo hic est? *quo patre* natus?" (29)
> *quo patre* sit natus (36)
> est ille, *pater* quod erat meus (41)

If Horace stood for the senate, his father would be described in the same brutal words: *Syrus Dama aut Dionysius*, nor would Horace have any way to tell the people who the elder Horace really was. Or, if we like, we can say that the second half of the transitional line 45 is as important as the first. Rhetoric should tell us so; it is repeated:

> nunc ad me redeo, *libertino patre* natum
> quem rodunt omnes, *libertino patre* natum (45–46)

and repeated:

> non ego me *claro* natum *patre* . . . (58)

and again:

> non *patre praeclaro*, sed vita et pectore puro (64)

until we get to the real point at line 71:

> causa fuit *pater* his,

when the answer to the question *quo patre natus?* can finally be given as Horace wants to give it.[46] Maecenas cares, not about Horace's birth, but

[46] For this artistic point in the structure of 1.6, cf. E. L. Harrison, "Horace's Tribute to his Father," *CP* 60 (1965) 111–14.

about what sort of man he really is. He is therefore assumed to care also what sort of man Horace's father really was, not what the people would rudely claim he was, if Horace were a marginal and precarious senator living in fear of another hyper-conservative censorship.

There is something amusing, however, about the appearance Horace's father actually makes in the poem. One might have expected Horace to dwell at this point on his father's excellence as a moral person and a moral teacher; to go on in the vein of the famous passage 1.4.105–37, cited earlier. After all, the argument is that if Horace is a good person as a man and friend, and of few and forgivable vices, his father was the cause (65–71). But instead of that, Horace tells us with pride how expensive and how gentlemanly an education he had, and how it was meant to, and did, advance him in society. That is his answer to the question *quo patre natus?* Even the one reference to what we might be tempted to call morality in the passage about his father—that the elder Horace was a vigilant enough guardian to preserve his son not only from juvenile unchastity but from the reputation of it (82–84)—is in context merely one more detail of Horace's claim to have had a genuinely upper-class education. The vulgar centurions' boys Horace's father spared him as schoolmates had neither pedagogues nor parents at leisure to oversee their morals. The rest is all, unambiguously, about status. Horace's father was *macro pauper agello* (71), but did not send him to a low-class country *ludus* to be educated for business instead of literature and philosophy (72–75).[47] Instead

[47] In spite of Fraenkel's fantasies about Horace's sufferings as a child from the children at the *Flavi ludus* ([above, note 3] 3, followed incautiously by Wiseman [above, note 3] 67), was Horace ever in any danger of going there? The point of *S.* 1.6.72–75 is its contempt for every detail of the pupils' equipage:

> magni
> quo pueri magnis e centurionibus orti
> laevo suspensi loculos tabulamque lacerto
> ibant octonos referentes Idibus aeris.

Horace, by contrast, had slaves (plural) to carry *his* satchels and tablets for him, and one assumes Orbilius, and his other fashionable teachers, were paid by them or his father. Centurions and their sons are not likely to have felt themselves above wealthy freedmen and their sons: they got more, not less, contempt when they pushed into the upper classes (Wiseman [above, note 3] 76–77)—except for those who were rich, and who had not been private soldiers first; and such men would not have sent their sons to a *ludus*, any more than Horace's father did. The *ludus* was evidently not, as was once thought, a primary school by which students qualified for the *schola*. It was rather for the practical and elementary business education of the lower classes. See A. D. Booth, "Elementary and Secondary Education in the Roman Empire," *Florilegium* 1 (1979) 1–➡ "The Schooling of Slaves in First-Century Rome," *TAPA* 109 (1979) 11–➡ R. Kaster, "Notes on 'Primary' and 'Secondary' Schools in Late Antiquity," *TAPA* 113 (1983) 323–46. The reverse of what Fraenkel says is more likely to be true (Booth puts it well: "Horace's father had him

puerum est ausus Romam portare docendum
artis quas doceat quivis eques atque senator
semet prognatos. vestem servosque sequentis
in magno ut populo, siqui vidisset, avita
ex re praeberi sumptus mihi crederet illos;
ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnis
circum doctores aderat. (76–82)

Accompanying his son to school presumably was not an inelegant thing to do, given the display of slaves attending Horace as well, and given that it implied, on Horace's father's part, all the leisure in the world, and therefore a made fortune. Of course he did not *insist* on pushing Horace forward into the ranks of *equites* and *senatores*:

nec timuit, sibi ne vitio quis verteret olim,
si praeco parvas aut, ut fuit ipse, coactor
mercedes sequerer: neque ego essem questus; at hoc *nunc*
laus illi debetur et a me gratia maior. (85–88)

Nunc: "as things are." If Horace were expressing a desire to advance in society still further on these grounds, the passage would be vulgar even in terms of Roman feelings. But "as things are" he is not Maecenas' parasite, and does not need to be. Horace's father bought his son the education, Horace has himself won the position, of a prosperous, equestrian *amicus* instead.

One can see why Victorian commentators passed so easily over Horace's good competence, upper-middle class status, and easy job that are such a source of pride to him, such an obvious argument (to him) that he is not, and cannot be conceived as, some mere *scurra* condemned to live on a great man's favors. The picture they left behind, which needs to be dismissed from Horatian studies, is of a poor tradesman's son admitted to aristocratic company, as he might have been at Eton, for his literary genius, and keeping that privilege all his life by handing wine-glasses and looking up quotations for his great patrons. In nineteenth-century school editions of Horace, Charles Lamb and his clerkship at the East India House are invoked often. But the picture Horace draws of his youthful self, which Suetonius' life amply confirms, is more like George Osborne in *Vanity Fair*, provided by a rich but not quite acceptable father in the City with education, a commission in the army, and smiling permission to spend his time there losing at cards to, and gaining social advancement from, the younger Ciceros and the Valerius Messallas of the day, the Lord Tarquins and Lord Deuceaces.

Did Horace's father intend still more? Probably he did. Horace and his father were evidently in Rome in 50 B.C., when Horace was fifteen,

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avoid a cheap *ludus* in Venusia," "Schooling" 19, note 37). If Horace ever associated with such children, they suffered from his snobbery, not he from theirs.

and Appius Claudius Pulcher damaged the Pompeian cause he had just joined by "purifying" the senate of all the freedmen's sons he could find on the rolls. No doubt the comparison Horace obliquely makes by mentioning him as *censor Appius* and calling to memory his ancestor, the *censor Appius* of 312 B.C. who had won the adoration of the lower classes by encouraging *ignoto patre* and *libertino patre nati* to join the senate for the first time, was heard in the streets in Horace's youth, and often.[48] But Appius was an exceptionally severe and (to the cause he served) embarrassing censor, who alienated valuable support from Pompeius. If Horace wanted to use the education and friends he won in Rome and Athens to their full potential he might well have hoped for better than a merely marginal career in the senate; but that much at least.

In the end Horace may well have had Brutus' encouragement too. Why was he given his tribuneship in Brutus' army? Fraenkel quotes Plutarch, *Brutus* 24.2 on Brutus' search for talent in Athens:[49]

> τοὺς σχολάζοντας ἀπὸ Ῥώμης ἐν ἄστει νέους ἀνελάμβανε καὶ συνεῖχεν. ὧν ἦν καὶ Κικέρωνος υἱός, ὃν ἐπαινεῖ διαφερόντως καί φησιν . . . θαυμάζειν οὕτω γενναῖον ὄντα καὶ μισοτύραννον.

But that was Cicero's son. There is a good reason, one could suggest, why Brutus looked lower in the social scale for at least one of his appointments (it need not have been the only one): he had himself helped, along with Pompey, to defend Appius in 50 against the charges of *ambitus* and *maiestas* that nearly aborted his candidature for the censorship.[50] He was well known, then, to be partly responsible for Appius' war on low-born senators. Brutus could well have felt it expedient to give people like Horace official appointments, in order to show that the cause of the Republic did not involve reversing all Caesar's encouraging gestures to the municipalities, the business classes, and the freedmen and their families. If Brutus had won, Horace might have hoped for a successful career indeed.

He did not win, and Horace found himself deprived of his father's lands at Venusia—not, evidently, because they were his, but because Venusia was selected for the unpopular confiscations of land after Philippi that Octavian was left by Antonius to manage. He mentions this elsewhere as having been a heavier financial blow to him than one would have thought from his modestly calling his father *macro pauper agello* in 1.6:

> unde simul primum me dimisere Philippi,
> *decisis* humilem *pennis* inopemque paterni
> et laris et fundi. (*E.* 2.2.49–51)

[48] Cf. note 40 above.
[49] Fraenkel (above, note 3) 10, note 4.
[50] *RE* "Junius" 53, col. 980 (Gelzer).

Yet Horace was still able from what was left of his family fortune, presumably in *nummi* (with his father's bankers?), and the influence of his friends, to obtain pardon and buy himself the scribeship and the comfortable living he describes here: *nunc*, "as things are," he is doing as well as his father hoped and better. He is *scriba quaestorius*, at the top of the hierarchy of government officials, while the *coactores* like his father (whether they worked for business, the government, or both) ranked far lower;[51] *eques Romanus*, *iudex selectus*, and an *amicus* of Maecenas, Vergil, and Varius. In this rank, moreover, he is free to live as casually as he likes his life of equestrian leisure: no one will criticize him if he has the Catonian simplicity to appear in public traveling as a lone *eques* on a *mulus curtus*.

IV. *O totiens servus*: The Other Side of the Horatian Persona

With one last complacent sneer at his alternate-self, at poor Tillius trying to look *praeclarus* when he cannot be (110), Horace now turns to a description of his innocent, lazy, Epicurean day of leisure, the *nunc* that his father's efforts and his own have bought him:

> quacumque libido est
> incedo solus, percontor quanti olus ac far,
> fallacem circum vespertinumque pererro
> saepe forum, adsisto divinis. inde domum me
> ad porri et ciceris refero laganique catinum;
> cena ministratur pueris tribus et lapis albus
> pocula cum cyatho duo sustinet, adstat echinus
> vilis, cum patera guttus, Campana supellex.
> deinde eo dormitum, non sollicitus, mihi quod cras
> surgendum sit mane, obeundus Marsya, qui se
> voltum ferre negat Noviorum posse minoris.
> ad quartam iaceo: post hanc vagor aut ego lecto
> aut scripto quod me tacitum iuvet unguor olivo,
> non quo fraudatis inmundus Natta lucernis.
> ast ubi me fessum sol acrior ire lavatum
> admonuit, fugio campum lusumque trigonem.
> pransus non avide, quantum interpellet inani
> ventre diem durare, domesticus otior. haec est
> vita solutorum misera ambitione gravique. . . . (S. 1.6.111–29)

A beautiful picture, which leads us, however, into more complex regions of thought as far as Horace's poetic *persona* is concerned. For, as Lejay long ago saw, it is (for all its realistic Roman details) pure convention. The "Epicurean day" is a topos—a leisure-class one, so it suits well with Horace's modest but firm proclamation that he has a

[51] On the *coactores*, cf. Fraenkel (above, note 3) 5; J. A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome* (London 1967) 219–20.

competence and does not need to live off Maecenas' charity. Not only that, so is the sort of satirical attack on the "Epicurean day" that a Crispinus or his *ianitor* might make. The passages that give away the "secret" are in Cicero and Epictetus. Cicero writes in 46 to his Epicurean friend L. Papirius Paetus (*ad Fam.* 9.20) that he has given himself over to the pleasures of the table:

> in Epicuri nos, adversari nostri, castra coniecimus, nec tamen ad hanc insolentiam sed ad illam tuam lautitiam. . . . haec igitur est nunc vita nostra: mane salutamus domi et bonos viros multos, sed tristis, et hos laetos victores, qui me quidem perofficiose et peramanter observant. ubi salutatio defluxit, litteris me involvo: aut scribo aut lego. veniunt etiam qui me audiunt quasi doctum hominem quia paulo sum quam ipsi doctior. inde corpori omne tempus datur. (1, 3)

Lejay on 1.6.129 quotes this passage, adding "La *salutatio* et les consultations montrent que Cicéron ne pouvait pas entièrement se dépouiller le vieux homme. Horace se rapproche bien plus du programme du véritable épicurien." He then quotes Epictetus 3.24, which needs to be set out here at greater length than in Lejay:

> What else do they [the Epicureans] wish than to sleep without impediment and without necessity, and then getting up to yawn at leisure and wash their face, then write and read what they wish, then to talk some nonsense or other and get praised by their friends, no matter what they say, then to go out into the walks and walk a bit and then take their bath, then eat, then sleep—the kind of "sleep" you might expect of such men—why should I tell you? anyone could guess. Come, show me your way of life that you so love, you zealot of truth and Socrates and Diogenes. What are you doing here in Athens? just this? worse, perhaps? so why do you call yourself a Stoic? And then traitors to the Roman state are punished harshly, but traitors at once to so great a name and so great a thing are to be let off scot free? Or is this impossible, but is the law divine and authoritative and not to be run away from like a slave (ἀναπόδραστος). . . . For what does it say? " . . . let him that disobeys the divine ordering be lowly, be a slave, let him hurt, be grudged, be pitied, in sum, let him fail, let him mourn." (3.24.39–43)

Just as Cicero's and Epictetus' obviously conventional "Epicurean" accounts of a leisure day resemble Horace's in every small detail, Epictetus' equally conventional Stoic rebuke to the enjoyers of such days resembles obviously the *o totiens servus* lecture Davus gives his master in 2.7. In that poem, Horace looks back on his "innocent" Epicurean life, but from the point of view of his own *scurrae* and slaves—who see it more or less as Epictetus does. Two thoughts result.

First, that the "Epicurean day" in Horace is more of a luxury item than it looks. We need hardly believe (as so many seekers for biographi-

cal fact in the poems have done) that Horace could afford no more than three slaves to serve his table at his Roman house. The *topos* of Epicurean "simplicity," rather, is plainly one for the luxurious and gentlemanly, who can afford better but consider this much tasteful. It is a *topos* for Cicero joking painfully about how he abandons the Republic, now Caesar has won, for a life like that of Paetus, devoted not to extravagance but to *lautitia*; or for Epictetus trying to make the Marcus Ciceros of his day, the young Roman nobility lounging about Athens and giving more time to leisure than to study, feel guilty about living with pleasurable "simplicity." The point of *Satires* 1.6, after all, is the description of Horace's secure, gentlemanly status as an *amicus* of the great, not a *scurra*. The *topos* he chooses to elaborate by way of showing how much he owes his father's efforts to make him secure, is one that reveals him as the possessor of an *otium* not simply *equestre*, but even senatorial—or at least quaestorian. Nor does it undercut his assertion of comfort and independence to have an imaginary Stoicising slave in a later poem satirize this *otium* as something less moral: it is *otium* still.

Secondly, the revelation in Epictetus of what a contemporary Stoic, like "Crispinus" or his janitor, might have said sarcastically of such an innocent day takes us a little deeper, if not into Horace, at least into his *persona*. Epictetus doubts that the Epicurean leisure-artist's nights are all that innocent; and when Horace protests at 1.6.68 his freedom from *mala lustra*, disreputable pursuits, as the result of his excellent father's training, does that not strain credulity a little in the author of *Satires* 1.2 and *Epodes* 8, 11, and 12? Or when he protests the simplicity of his house and table, does that not strain credulity a little in the amateur critic of good food and dinner manners of *Satires* 2.4 and 8?

It is interesting, therefore, to consider the rope he gives, in *Satires* 2, to imaginary satirists of himself—Damasippus in 3, Davus in 7—for they say (in the name of the Stoics) much what Epictetus says of the Epicurean man of leisure in the passage quoted above. Damasippus claims that Horace's reading and writing, *aut lecto aut scripto / quod me tacitum iuvet*, lead nowhere but to mere indolence (2.3.1–16)—a splendid joke, considering that this opens a 326-line satirical diatribe half as long as a book of epic, written by Horace himself. By this device, Horace manages to assert his possession of perfect literary *otium*, and lampoon it, and assert its productivity all at the same time. Damasippus criticizes Horace for making costly improvements to his Sabine farm and adds:

> an quodcumque facit Maecenas, te quoque verum est,
> tantum dissimilem et tanto certare minorem? (312–13)

Keissling-Heinze-Burck, however, will have none of this. The *fable convenue* about Horace's villa is that it was a modest affair, and that must be saved at all costs:

> *Aedificat*: das wird nichts weiter sein, als dass H. auf seinem vor kurzem erhaltenen Gütchen das Wohnhaus, das bis dahin wohl nur einen Pächter beherbergt hatte, nach seinen Bedürfnissen umbaut, höchstens, dass er dort ein neues errichtet. (on *S.* 3.2.308)

Of course the point of the note is that Damasippus' claim that Horace is rivaling Maecenas in house-building is extravagant, and so it is. But why should Horace's house not be newly built, or less fine, or less finely redone, than any other equestrian house? Only because of the Victorian tradition. And if he built a new house ("at most"!), why need it have been a poor one? Horace already owned a house in Rome. House ownership in the city of Rome, let alone of a house with stables, grooms, and within walking distance of the business districts, the Campus, and the lawcourts (for so Horace pictures his situation in 1.6, 1.9, *E.* 1.14, and elsewhere), was a great and unusual luxury, and many an *eques*, and even senators, paid through the nose to rent instead.[52] If Horace was able to indulge (and parade) a taste for improvements that says more about him still.

Damasippus goes on to accuse Horace of *cultum maiorem censu* (324)—so his public appearance was fairly elegant, at least on occasion, after all—and *mille puellarum, puerorum mille furores* (325). These are light charges, however, compared to Davus' characterization of his master as a *scurra* at heart and a slave. Here, it is important to consider the place of *S.* 2.3 and 2.7 in the context of the well-organized Augustan poetry book in which they appear. *S.* 2.3 obviously undercuts, in so far as it is directed at Horace himself, the poet's praise of the ideal of simplicity in diet and life through the mouth of the rustic Ofellus of 2.2, once frugally rich and now happily poor. In 2.3 Damasippus, once extravagantly rich and now sourly philosophical, is mordantly suspicious of Horace's belief in any such thing. A similar but much more important kind of irony and undercutting is found in the contrast of 2.6 and 2.7.

It might be said that 1.6 and 2.6 are counterparts to each other in the two books of *Satires*. Both portray Horace's relationship to Maecenas, to Roman society, and to the ideal of the simple life, but 2.6 updates the information in 1.6. Horace now has the Sabine Farm in

[52] We need not suppose that such ownership was already as rare as in the fourth century A.D., when the Roman regionary catalogues list about 1800 private homes as opposed to 42,000 *insulae*. But very many wealthy freedmen, *equites*, and even senators rented, unlike Horace and his father: cf. B. W. Frier, *Landlords and Tenants in Imperial Rome* (Princeton 1980) 21–47, especially 39–41. E. J. Champlin points out to me a text missed by Frier, Plutarch *Caesar* 42.2 (those of Pompey's supporters at Pharsalia who expected the praetorship or consulship if he won were already *renting* suitable houses at Rome through their agents). Martial, an *eques* also, was finally able to buy a house on the Quirinal about A.D. 94 after many years of renting, and is distinctly inclined to crow about it (cf. esp. 9.97.8: Frier, 44 note).

Rome's expensive, close-in *surburbana* in addition to his town house. He is now Maecenas' secure and envied friend of several years' standing, and lifted above the *invidia* of the crowd. He is obsequiously pursued by seekers for favor both in his own right and as Maecenas' *amicus*, yet longs for the peace and quiet of the countryside (he claims) every moment he is in Rome. There are lines in this *Satire*, too, that can be cleared up by thinking of Horace as *eques et scriba*, a man of station and rank in life that is not merely Maecenas' gift to him. In his new country retreat, thanks to Maecenas, Horace can be free of *mala ambitio* (28) and the need to obey the obligations of *amicitia* by being a *sponsor* or giving surety of another's good faith in court:

> "eia,
> ne prior officio quisquam respondeat, urge."
> sive aquilo radit terras seu bruma nivalem
> interiore diem gyro trahit, ire necessest.
> postmodo *quod mi obsit* clare certumque locuto. (23–26)

From this Horace intends us to understand that his testimony is both sought after and profitable to him as part of his observance of the obligations of *amicitia*, though his belief in the other's good faith may not be all that sincere. Then he pushes his way through the crowd, glorying in being asked if he is so pushy because he is on his way to see Maecenas (28–31). Then, as he approaches the Esquiline, he is overwhelmed with more requests to help other *amici* in court; and summonses to corporation meetings of the scribes; and requests for Maecenas' sign-manual. This brings him to recall what he had written in *S.* 1.6:

> revocas nono post mense, iubesque
> esse *in amicorum numero*. (61f.)
>
> septimus octavo propior iam fugerit annus
> ex quo Maecenas me coepit habere *suorum*
> *in numero*. (2.6.40–42)

But the friendship is still misunderstood; it is still the subject of *invidia*. The *invidia*, however, has softened to something more like what we would call "envy." Horace is *Fortunae filius* to the crowd when he sits beside Maecenas in the fourteen rows at the *ludi*, or plays ball with him in public. Because people do not understand that Horace is no repository of Maecenas' and Caesar's secrets, they shake their heads and admire him as a Sphinx (57–58) when he claims not to know these. Still: when can he get back to the country, where his Epicurean day of 1.6 is still open to him (how cleverly Horace has said: because he is nowadays unavoidably an important person, with business to do, when he is at Rome):

> o rus, quando ego te aspiciam quandoque licebit
> nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis

ducere sollicitae iucunda oblivia vitae?
o quando faba Pythagorae cognata simulque
uncta satis pingui ponentur oluscula lardo? (60–65)

At these *noctes cenaeque deum*, the discourse is of philosophy, not common Roman gossip of business and the theatre, and the poem goes on to the idyll of the country mouse and the city mouse, told by one of Horace's rustic guests, with which it concludes as the country mouse (not Horace) says:

"haud mihi vita
est opus hac," ait et "valeas: me silva cavusque
tutus ab insidiis tenui solabitur ervo." (115–17)

There can be few more shattering transitions in the Satires than that between this conclusion and 2.7. Davus, his slave, accosts Horace with a tirade about the inconsistencies of "Priscus," modeled on Horace's own about the equally inconsistent Hermogenes Tigellius of *S.* 1.3.1–19. There, Horace had been asked by an imaginary interlocutor, "quid tu / nullane habes vitia?" and replied, "immo alia et fortasse minora" (1.3.19–20). However, in this poem, when asked (21) *quorsum haec tam putida tendunt* by his master, apparently uninterested in the tribute to his own earlier verses in 1.3, Davus replies *ad te*—you are the one who has no consistency—and goes on with a list of all the lies Horace has told about himself in earlier poems in the two books, comparing them with his "actual" behavior.

Horace's praise of Catonian simplicity, of the *fortunam et mores antiquae plebis*, is only a pretence (2.7.22–24). His fondness for the countryside, so lovingly described in the previous satire (2.6), is equally a pretence, for he longs for Rome when he is there (28–29). So much for *o rus, quando ego te aspiciam* a page or two back at 2.6.60; Horace is no better than the rich fools in Lucretius who can be happy with neither *urbs* nor *rus*, with neither town-house nor country-house (Lucretius 3.1060–75) because of their lack of inner peace. Horace's praise of simple dinners vanishes the minute an impromptu invitation from Maecenas arrives, and he leaves his own *scurrae* (Horace has them!) to curse him as a hypocrite as bad as they are, who makes it worse still by lecturing them on morals (29–42). His nocturnal adventures are what Epictetus and Crispinus' Stoic janitor agree a lazy luxurious Epicurean's would be (46–72). All of this adds up, as in Epictetus, to show that the person who lives such an "Epicurean" life is merely a *servus*, full of guilt and pain. In the strangely beautiful concluding lines of Davus' tirade—strangely, because in such a low context:

adde quod idem
non horam tecum esse potes, non otia recte
ponere, teque ipsum vitas fugitivus et erro,

> iam vino quaerens, iam somno fallere curam:
> frustra: nam comes atra premit sequiturque fugacem. (111–15)

Being rich has its dark side, its inescapable "dark companion." In terms of what must have been the familiar diatribe-thoughts Epictetus gives us, Horace, the *eques* and *iudex* with his gold ring, is to Davus only a δοῦλος and a runaway at that, a *fugitivus* from the θεῖος νόμος ἀναπόδραστος: δυστυχείτω, θρηνείτω. In a wonderful final joke, Horace concludes by getting furiously angry at all this and threatening Davus with—exile to the Sabine Farm! His slave, as an *operarius* (*accedes opera agro nona Sabino*, 118) may learn the content there, presumably, that Horace does not have in Rome but has in the country. His slave "Davus," that is; a character in the poem, or merely the accusing conscience of the poem's persona-Horace, and not quite to be taken seriously even as that, moving and pointed as some of Davus' words are.

For of course, wonderful as all this is, it is an elaborate literary and philosophical joke, not a series of biographical revelations about Horace; if at first it seems serious self-accusation, Horace's pointing so clearly to Damasippus', Davus', and his own sources in the commonplaces of the philosophical diatribe opens up a splendidly confusing series of receding mirrors in which facts vanish and Horace, Damasippus, and Davus all three become puzzling features in a wonderful game of Alexandrian cat's cradle. If the persona of the satirical Horace develops its dark side along with its pastoral, leisurely, and Epicurean one, the world of the factual memoir is still left far behind. We know as a fact from the *Satires*, exactly as Lily Ross Taylor thought, that Horace was prosperous, that he was in fact no such timid and dependent creature in society as the nineteenth century used to make him out. But that is only what a reader of his day would have seen at once, the sort of historical truth *we* have to reconstruct from the text.

It is nonetheless true. Horace's talk of his modest circumstances and poetic poverty is a mere polite pretence, exactly like Catullus'. He was never poor. T. P. Wiseman discusses the "essential homogeneity" of the Roman moneyed class, and the sizable fortune even one-quarter of the equestrian census, 100,000 sesterces, must have amounted to in the eyes of respectable middle-class Romans. Pre-Caesarian centurions, for example, like those whose children and their teachers the little Horace was taught to scorn, made at most 1440 sesterces a year. Yet Oppius and Balbus could[53]

> in courteous mock-modesty, describe themselves in a letter to Cicero as "homines humiles," when in fact they were very rich men. One has to distinguish between the standards applied *within* the upper class, whereby a fortune of 100,000 *HS* is compara-

[53] Wiseman (above, note 3) 67.

> tively insignificant, and those describing Roman society as a whole. Most of the ancient sources concentrate on the former, with misleading results for the historian who incautiously accepts their language in modern terms as applying to the whole spectrum of society.

Horace's description of himself as *humilis* when he had at least the *HS* 400,000 required for a senator and the gold ring which indicated the *eques equo publico* is precisely similar, a graceful upper-class affectation. Oppius and Balbus, like Catullus, had many imitators in all periods, some much richer than Horace. The younger Pliny speaks of his *modicae facultates*, and most outrageously Fronto, who was pleased (because of its Horatian memories) to own, along with much else, Maecenas' palace on the Esquiline a hundred and fifty years later, speaks of his *res haud copiosae* (*Ver. Imp.* 2.7.5) and says "pauperem me quam ope cuiusquam adiutum, postremo egere quam poscere malui" (*Nep. Am.* 9). These are words Horace himself—*dissimulator opis propriae*, as he worries about making himself (*E.* 1.9.9)—might have inspired.[54]

What we can know, on the other hand, about Horace's personal feelings and ideals through this maze of literary reference, cross-reference, and reworked diatribe-topoi adorned with convincing "real-life" details, is not precisely history. In one way it is true that (as Fraenkel begins his book by saying) "Horace tells us far more about himself, his character, his development, and his way of life (his βίος) than any other great poet in antiquity." In another it is as true of this poet as any that "When thou hast done, thou hast not Donne"; and even the task of seeing what is stated as fact requires the literary critic's work as much as the historian's. Were *all* Horace's days spent at leisure in the period 38–30 B.C., for example; and none "visiting Marsyas" and gathering the scribal commissions to pay for improving, or even building from scratch, a fine house in Rome? If we take his poetry as flat historical fact, we might think one thing; if we are more careful about what the boundaries of poetic self-portraiture and fact might be, another entirely.

But the tone of Horace's poetry is from the first a proud one; the *aurea mediocritas* he marks out for himself is in social terms something worth having, that he knows is worth having, that sets him far above *scurrae* like Sarmentus and tasteless *nouveaux riches* like the Nasidienus of *S.* 2.8—neither of whom, however, Maecenas disdains to associate with. For Horace does not in fact represent his friend as a snob, but as the patron of all classes and kinds of men, just as the first lines of *S.* 1.6 proclaim him. Horace feels himself, however, and appears from his poetry and from Suetonius' life to have been felt by the governing

[54] On this rhetorical convention among the rich, see E. J. Champlin, *Fronto and Antonine Rome* (Cambridge, Mass. 1980) 21–23, 25 (esp. note 28, p. 151).

classes he served, to be very much Sarmentus' or Nasidienus' social superior. No doubt by the rules of contemporary Roman society he actually was, given the many titles to respect he had as knight, tribune, scribe, and learned person; his circle of powerful *amici*, who were not given him, any more than these titles, by Maecenas, but began with his friends from school in Rome and Athens; and his ample *census*.

The affectation of humility, therefore, that has misled so many critics about his attitudes is in the end merely one more of the governing class clichés his education and status, his secure social position below the senators and the best-born *equites*, and above nearly everybody else, made easy to him. Nisbet and Hubbard (on *Odes* 1.29) well comment on the family resemblance between Horace's raillery to young Iccius about the money to be made fighting in the provinces, and Cicero's on similar topics to the young Trebatius Testa, later to be Horace's friend also. They observe that "Horace's attitude to the Arabian war suits his period and new-found status . . . " and that he "has transferred to poetry the ironic banter of a civilized governing class."[55] How true that is of the *Satires* Lily Ross Taylor should long ago have made us realize.[56]

Additional Note

After this paper was accepted, and while I was revising it for publication, E. Badian's review article on *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome*, ed. Barbara K. Gold (Austin 1982) appeared in *CP* 80 (1985) 341–57. In attacking J. E. G. Zetzel's essay in that book, because it gives *clientela* a minimal role in determining the content of poetry, Badian touches on the subject of my present paper, arguing that of the four poets Zetzel mentions as free from any financial need of patronage, Catullus, Vergil, Horace, and Propertius, Catullus alone qualified for this description (350). But here Zetzel is (as the footnotes to the above article show) on the side of the historians, Treggiari, Wiseman, and the rest. Badian has put himself on the side of the literary critics who take literally the badinage of the Roman rich about being *pauper* and *tenuis*.

Here are Badian's principal statements on the subject. " . . . It is misleading (though, later in their lives, true) to describe [Vergil, Horace, and Propertius] as *equites* of independent means . . . it was client poetry that gave them the means of independence, which for a long time (in a sense, all the time) they had to work hard to maintain." (347) "It was only in 30 B.C., after about nine years of acquaintance, that the long-promised gift of the farm (a point on which

[55] R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace; Odes, Book I* (Oxford 1970) 338–39.

[56] An early draft of this paper was given at the APA meeting in Toronto, 1984. I wish to thank the Department of Classics at Princeton University for their generous invitation to spend the spring of 1985 teaching at Princeton, where it was written; and several colleagues and students at Texas and Princeton for help and comments, especially M. Gwyn Morgan and Jeff Tatum at Texas, and the editor, E. J. Champlin, Glenn Most, and John Walsh at Princeton.

we have no reason to disbelieve the poet) released Horace from the worst miseries of a client's life.... the fact that we have no such data on Vergil and Propertius gives us no reason to postulate that their experience was essentially different.... " (350).

But *Satires* 1.6 is a portrait of Horace in 35 B.C., several years *before* the Sabine Farm. If Horace had to work "all the time" at this period to maintain his independence (even "in a sense"), he doesn't sound like it. Vergil's and Propertius' work schedules are not available, but they also *sound* like men of fairly abundant leisure. As for Horace's nine years of "the worst miseries of a client's life," that is either meaningless, or implies that Horace—and Vergil, and Propertius, since "we have no reason to postulate that their experience was essentially different"—stood in line for *sportulae*, lent their sides to help Maecenas' litter through the streets, and dined at lower tables on worse food than their host's.

In note 7, p. 347, Badian tries to account for Horace's *scriptus quaestorius*, now that we all know it was an expensive and privileged job and not a clerkship; therefore that Horace was, in any event, not poor from 41 on.

> It deserves ... comment that Horace never alludes to the purchase of his *scriptus*, in spite of his loquacity about his origins and the battle of Philippi.... Yet he had returned after the battle, a *libertini filius* who had risen above his station on the losing side, to find his father's *lar et fundus* confiscated. It is inconceivable that he not only gained a full pardon, but had enough money of his own left for that purchase ... the price must be assumed to have been high and the post in any case to have been available only through patronage.... Since Horace is not elsewhere reticent about his benefactors, his silence about his patron who secured him his office (and perhaps his pardon as well) must be deliberate. The only reason conceivable is that the man later fell into disgrace and could not be mentioned. Since we have no relevant information, names cannot confidently be suggested. But it is clear that the patron cannot have stood on the side of the Republic (aristocrats who had were, at that time, themselves afraid for their lives and properties): he must have been well connected on the Triumviral side. An obvious candidate would be Salvidienus Rufus, at the height of his power after Philippi and sent to his death by M. Antonius' betrayal in 40. But we know of no connection with Horace. However, the answer may be simpler: an Antonian connection would also be best forgotten, at the time when Horace was writing his autobiographical poems.

It is, rather, perfectly conceivable that Horace's father's entire landed property (or rather Horace's own: his father was dead before Philippi) could have disappeared and still left him enough to buy the scribeship. A man like the elder Horace was likelier to be *dives positis in faenore nummis*, as became a businessman, than *dives agris*, as became a gentleman. If he educated his son in Athens on anything remotely like the scale of the young aristocrats among whom he intended Horace to make an impression, it cost him a lot. Cicero assigned his son, for his stay in Athens at the same time, *HS* 80,000 *per annum*, the net rents, after commissions, of about *HS* 1,000,000 in urban rental property whose income was set aside for the purpose, and was indignant only when he found that Marcus Cicero spent still more: see Bruce Frier's discussion, "Cicero's Management of his Urban Properties," *CJ* 74 (1978) 1–6. If Horace's school funds, or if some of the rest of his father's capital, survived at his father's bankers' in Rome, it is perfectly conceivable that it reached the going price of a scribeship, which sounds as if it equaled the equestrian census or somewhat less; perhaps *HS* 200,000–400,000.

As for possible patrons, we have a rich field to choose from, once more in *Satires* 1. Besides Maecenas, Horace had wealthy *amici* in droves in 35 B.C., some who had been his companions in Brutus' army and some who had fought against Brutus, some who were currently working for Octavian and some who were working for Antonius; to give one group-list, which does not exhaust those mentioned in *Satires* 1:

> Plotius et Varius, Maecenas Virgiliusque,
> Valgius et probet haec Octavius optimus atque
> Fuscus et haec utinam Viscorum laudet uterque;
> Pollio, te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, simulque
> vos, Bibule et Servi, simul his te, candide Furni,
> complures alios, doctos ego quos et amicos
> prudens praetereo. (1.10.81–88)

The imagery of this passage is explicitly that of *clientela*: Horace can joyously appear before the "court" of his critics, accompanied by so great a band of literary and political *amici*. Among these are far better candidates for Horace's helper to the *scriptus*: Badian thinks we want an Antonian, and that it cannot have been someone who stood on the side of the Republic, because all those people were too frightened "for their lives and properties" after Philippi to help Horace. There are two especially interesting Antonians here, both of whom were *immediately* pardoned and admitted to Antonius' high favour after Philippi, and had not the least reason to be afraid of helping an old comrade in arms from Brutus' army. First, the great M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, patron of poets, historian, orator, grammarian, subject of the *Panegyricus Messallae*, and a lifelong friend of Horace (*C.* 3.21, *AP* 371, etc.). He was in Athens with Horace and served with Brutus, but refused to inherit the command after Philippi, engineering instead a general capitulation to Antonius of nobles who had fled to Thasos, in which they all obtained pardon and many entered Antonius' service. Second, Brutus' stepson L. Calpurnius Bibulus (*RE* "Calpurnius" 27), a schoolfellow of Horace and the younger Cicero at Athens, and also a comrade in arms of Horace's under Brutus, joining him at the same time as Messalla (Appian *Civil Wars* 4.38). (A side note: in *Att.* 12.32 [45 B.C.], Cicero hopefully asks Atticus to hold both Messalla and Bibulus up to his son as examples of young nobles studying in Athens who would think *HS* 80,000 a year perfectly sufficient). In 35, when this was published, Messalla had gone over from Antonius to Octavian, but Bibulus was still on Antonius' side: he was shortly to be praetor, and to die in 32 as Antonius' governor of Syria. Horace was therefore unconscious, in 35, that his "Antonian connections were best forgotten." Or at any other time; one of Horace's latest odes (4.2, 15 B.C.) is to Iullus Antonius, who would hardly have been interested in homage from a poet who had basely cancelled his verses to Antonians. For Horace's Antonian *amici* in 35, cf. also Messalla's half-brother L. Gellius Poplicola (*cos.* 36), mentioned along with him, who remained an Antonian to the end, and C. Fonteius Capito (*cos.* 33), *ad unguem / factus homo, Antoni non ut magis alter amicus* (*S.* 1.5.35f.). The *complures alios . . . quos prudens praetereo* might contain others; at all events they make it very doubtful that Horace is never, in any instance, "reticent about his benefactors," i.e. fails to mention them by name in his poems. In fact, we know Horace received two large benefactions *from Augustus himself* later in life, about which his poems say not a word.

There is one point of pure literary criticism Badian brings up—Horace's pride in his own poetry as expressed in *Odes* 3.30—which touches my own portrait of Horace too closely to be omitted here. Zetzel claimed that Horace in

this poem calls himself a poetic *princeps*, and Badian (352) thinks he has caught Zetzel in a mistranslation of the Latin:

> It is simply false to say that he calls himself "poetic *princeps*" or that he paints "an image of the poet as conqueror and *princeps*." ... We must resist attempts at substituting the critic's vision for what the poet obviously intended.... For the meaning of *princeps* here (not that it is hard to see) we fortunately have Horace's own restatement in the more pedestrian strain of *Epistles* 1.19.21–24:
>
> libera per vacuum posui vestigia princeps,

and so on.

Anyone can judge whether Zetzel's point is hard to see. It is just an application of Nietzsche's famous comment on the *Odes*, "this mosaic of words, in which every word, by sound, by placing, and by meaning, spreads its influence to the right, to the left, and over the whole":

> dicar, qua violens obstrepit Aufidus
> et qua pauper aquae Daunus agrestium
> regnavit populorum, ex humili *potens*
> *princeps* Aeolium carmen ad Italos
> deduxisse modos. (*Odes* 3.30.10–14)

Ex humili potens is taken by Porphyrio and "Acro," and nearly all critics since, to refer to Horace ("*ex humili potens*: gloriatur libertino patre natum se ad tantam claritatem studiorum pervenisse," Porphyrio.) Bentley convinced himself it meant Daunus, "qui (Illyricae gentis clarus vir, auctore Festo) primus apud Apulos regnum capessivit, et proinde ex homine privato princeps(!), ex exsule tyrannus, *ex humili potens* est factus." Surely in lyric poetry we may admit that the word order suggests, and is intended to suggest, that both *potens* and *princeps* are predicated of both men: Daunus became *ex humili potens princeps*, Horace, of whom the words are really meant, *ex humili* both *potens* and *princeps deduxisse modos*. There is nothing extravagant whatever in accepting the subaudition Zetzel claims, that Horace is a powerful prince, *potens princeps*, of song.