STEPHEN HARRISON

Introduction

This volume

The last major synoptic treatment of Horace's whole poetic output was Eduard Fraenkel's *Horace* (1957). A half-century later, the current *Companion* cannot hope to rival Fraenkel's volume in substance, individuality and consistency of vision, but its form of twenty-four chapters by twenty-one different scholars reflects the increased specialism and diversity of modern Horatian scholarship. A vast variety of topics in Horatian studies is investigated in detail in the more than one hundred items on the poet now appearing annually according to the records of *L'Année Philologique*, and it is arguably no longer possible for a single scholar to command the whole range of arguments and issues. Nor is this volume exhaustively encyclopaedic, in the manner of the splendid *Enciclopedia Oraziana* (Mariotti 1996–8), perhaps the most valuable product of the bimillennium of Horace's death, to which much reference is made in our individual chapters. This *Companion* aims to give a lively survey of the state of play in Horatian studies in the first decade of the twenty-first century in a manner which will be useful to students and scholars in other disciplines as well as to scholars working in the field of Horace.

The structure of the volume begins with 'Orientations', which set the background for Horace's poetic achievement. We commence in conventional style from the poet's biography. In chapter 1, Robin Nisbet gives us what can be known or inferred about Horace's life and career, information which is gathered almost wholly from his poems; in chapter 2, Stephen Harrison duly reminds us that poetry is not always a straightforward autobiographical source, and that Horace's self-presentation can be fantastic and conventional as well as realistic.

The second section of 'Orientations' provides an introduction to the repertoire of poetic and political knowledge needed by the modern reader in approaching Horace's work. The importance of Greek poetic models is

crucial, both archaic Greek poetry in the lyric and iambic genres (treated in chapter 3 by Gregory Hutchinson) and the aesthetics of brevity and polish of the Hellenistic period (discussed by Richard Thomas in chapter 4). At the same time, Horace's context in Roman literature is also fundamentally important, both in his reactions to predecessors such as Lucilius and Lucretius and in his interactions with his contemporaries Virgil and the elegists (the subject of Richard Tarrant's chapter 5); another central contemporary interaction is that with Augustus and his political framework, both through and without the patronage of Maecenas, dealt with by Michèle Lowrie in chapter 6.

The second section of the volume looks at the individual Horatian poetic genres, beginning with chapter 7, on the early and difficult iambic *Epodes*, by Lindsay Watson. Chapters 8, 9 and 10 separate out Horace's three enterprises in *sermo*, 'colloquial' hexameter poetry – the early *Satires*, treated by Frances Muecke, the middle- to late-period *Epistles*, discussed by Rolando Ferri, and the *Ars Poetica*, usually seen as Horace's last work, here dealt with by Andrew Laird – while in chapter 11 Alessandro Barchiesi turns to the *Odes*, the middle- to late-period lyric work usually seen as the culmination of Horace's poetic career, and the *Carmen Saeculare*, Horace's only known work of public commission for the religious festival of the *Ludi Saeculares* in 17 BC, which is now receiving renewed scholarly attention.

The third and longest section looks at a range of topics and themes of particular importance in Horace's poetry. Ethics are never far from the surface in Horatian verse, and John Moles in chapter 12 surveys the importance of philosophy in general for his work, stressing the range of schools alluded to (not just Epicureanism). In chapter 13 Jasper Griffin points to the importance of gods and religious themes in Horace, arguing that the literary aspect is especially important and that the more elevated the genre the more frequent divine appearances are. In chapter 14 Peter White considers the key topics of friendship and patronage, to some extent co-extensive in the world of Horace and Maecenas, looking at the careful Horatian focus on and elaboration of social relationships as a literary theme. Gregson Davis in chapter 15 tackles the subject of wine and the symposium, showing its key relationship to Horatian value-systems and literary interests. In chapter 16 Ellen Oliensis scrutinises Horace's presentation of issues of gender and erotic desire, Horace being an elite male writing for other elite males; Oliensis stresses the general lack of significant female figures in his poetry and the largely stereotypical presentation of the objects of elite male desire. In chapter 17 Stephen Harrison treats the topic of town and country, relating it to Roman cultural systems and to philosophical ideas, and considering it as the locus of both

moral virtue and proper pleasure. In chapter 18 Richard Rutherford surveys the ideas about literature and its function which form a continuous focus for Horatian poetry, especially in the *Odes* and literary *Epistles*; this is paired with chapter 19, in which Stephen Harrison shows some of the key features of Horace's own literary style, looking in detail at three poems from three different genres.

The final section presents five chapters on reception, which as elsewhere in classical studies is achieving a higher profile in contemporary scholarship; these chapters seek as a whole to give a continuous sketch of the afterlife of Horace's poetry, concentrating on English among the vernacular languages. In chapter 20 Richard Tarrant considers the reception of Horace's poetry from immediate reactions through the high Empire and late antiquity to a final coda on the Carolingian period; in chapter 21 Karsten Friis-Jensen takes up the story in the high medieval period, looking at the commentary tradition and its impact on the medieval view of Horace as well as literary appropriation in Latin; in chapter 22 Michael McGann takes us from Petrarch to Ben Jonson via Ariosto, looking at Horace's impact on poetry both in neo-Latin and in the vernacular languages in the Renaissance. Two further chapters fill out the picture: David Money (chapter 23) looks at the rich tradition of Horatianising neo-Latin in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Britain, Europe and the New World, while Stephen Harrison (chapter 24) covers the impact of Horace, still at the centre of the educational system, on poetry in English (including the USA and New Zealand) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with some glimpses at ongoing Horatian imitation in the twenty-first.

Bibliographical resources

Each chapter is equipped with a paragraph pointing to items of further interest on its topic, but here I list a few general bibliographical resources.

Editions, commentaries and translations currently available

[(a) *Satires*, (b) *Epodes*, (c) *Odes* and *Carmen Saeculare*, (d) *Epistles* and *Ars Poetica*]

Latin texts: all works in Shackleton Bailey (1984); (b) and (c) in Rudd (2004); (b) in G. Lee (1998). Free online texts of all the works can be found at http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/hor.html.

English translations: (a) and (d), Rudd (1979b); (b) and (c), D. West (1997), Rudd (2004); (b) G. Lee (1998)

Commentaries:

(a) Book 1: P. M. Brown (1993); Book 2: Muecke (1993)
(b) Mankin (1995); L. Watson (2003)
(c) Book 1: Nisbet and Hubbard (1970); D. West (1995). Book 2: Nisbet and Hubbard (1978); D. West (1998). Book 3: Nisbet and Rudd (2004); D. West (2002). Book 4: Putnam (1986)
(d) Book 1: Mayer (1994); Book 2 and *Ars Poetica*: Rudd (1989); Brink (1963, 1971, 1982).

Bibliography and collections of material

The massive Horatian bibliography for 1936–75 in Kissel (1981) and its supplement for the years 1976–91 in Kissel (1994) are both valuable. See also the survey of Horatian bibliography for the years 1957–87 by Doblhofer (1992). Much good material is now available on the internet (see e.g. <http://www.lateinforum.de/pershor.htm>); especially useful for recent work is the sequel to Kissel (1994), covering the years 1992–2005, published online by Niklas Holzberg in early 2006 at <http://www.psms.homepage.t-online.de/bibliographien.htm>. Very full bibliographical listings are to be found in the already mentioned *Enciclopedia Oraziana* (Mariotti 1996–8), which is always worth consulting if a copy is available.

PART I

Orientations

I

ROBIN NISBET

Horace: life and chronology

Horace says more about himself than any other ancient poet does, and our main source for his life must be his own poems. A subsidiary authority is the ancient *Vita* abbreviated from Suetonius, *De Poetis*;[1] his official posts under Hadrian enabled him to quote the correspondence of Augustus.

From Venusia to Philippi (65–42 BCE)

Quintus Horatius Flaccus was born on 8 December 65 BCE;[2] the Romans cared more than the Greeks for dates and birthdays. His birthplace was Venusia (Venosa) on the border of Apulia and Lucania (*Satires* 2.1.34–5). He recalls the mountains of his homeland (*Satires* 1.5.77–8, *Odes* 3.4.9–16) and the river Aufidus or Ofanto (*Odes* 3.30.10, 4.9.2),[3] but the ties were not to last.

Horace was the son of a freedman, though he himself was born free (cf. *Satires* 1.6.8). Moderns have speculated about Greek or even Eastern roots, but he seems to have regarded himself as a Sabellus or Samnite (*Epistles* 1.16.49, cf. *Satires* 2.1.35–6); his father had perhaps been enslaved as a result of capture in the Social War.[4] The reproach of servile origin rankled (*Satires* 1.6.45–8), but was later exploited by the poet when he wished to exaggerate the humbleness of his background (*Epistles* 1.20.20).

Horace's father was a *praeco* (auctioneer) and *coactor* (*Satires* 1.6.86–7), the middleman who provided credit for the purchaser;[5] it was a profitable business, and like other enterprising freedmen he acquired money and land (*Satires* 1.6.71). He was reluctant to send his child to the local school, which

1 Rostagni (1944).
2 For the year cf. *Odes* 3.21.1 (*consule Manlio*); for the month, *Epistles* 1.20.27; for the day, *Vita* 71.
3 For local patriotism in Italy see Fraenkel (1957) 3–4.
4 G. Williams (1995) 296–313. 5 Fraenkel (1957) 4–5.

was dominated by the hulking sons of hulking centurions (72–3), and he could afford to take him to Rome to be educated in style (76–80); there under Orbilius of Beneventum and other teachers he studied Livius Andronicus and (more agreeably) Homer (*Epistles* 2.1.69–71, 2.2.41–2). Horace gives an affectionate portrait of his father (*Satires* 1.4.105–29, 1.6.81–99), but understandably describes his moral instruction rather than his commercial capacities.

Horace next proceeded to Athens to study philosophy like Cicero's son and other members of the elite (*Epistles* 2.2.45 *inter silvas Academi quaerere verum* 'to seek Truth amid the groves of the Academy'); this was a further indication of his father's prosperity. In a city with such traditions of liberty Caesar's assassination found support, and after Brutus attended philosophy lectures in the summer of 44 BCE (Plutarch, *Brutus* 24.1), Horace joined the Republican cause (*Epistles* 2.2.46 *dura sed emovere loco me tempora grato* 'but the harshness of the times dislodged me from the agreeable spot'); youthful idealism should not be discounted, though later it proved convenient to forget it. In spite of his persistent pose of modesty and idleness, he must have impressed his superiors with his energy and efficiency, and in due course he was promoted to the high rank of *tribunus militum* (*Satires* 1.6.48). This may have carried with it equestrian rank,[6] and seems to have occasioned some jealousy among the well-born young men in Brutus' army.

In the autumn of 42 Horace fought on the losing side at Philippi, when Antony and Octavian, the future Augustus, defeated the tyrannicides Cassius and Brutus. When he says that he shamefully left his shield behind (*Odes* 2.7.10 *relicta non bene parmula*), he is imitating the insouciance of Archilochus,[7] who had abandoned his shield in much the same part of Thrace (5.2 West); and when the Republican army surrendered on Thasos, the second homeland of Archilochus, this may have given him the idea of imitating the most mordant of early Greek poets. When he mentions his part at Philippi, he is often admired for his candour; but in fact he denigrates his own commander (*Odes* 2.7.1–2 *o saepe mecum tempus in ultimum / deducte, Bruto militiae duce* 'you who were often led with me into a desperate crisis when Brutus led the campaign'[8]), and flatters Augustus (*Epistles* 2.2.47–8 *arma / Caesaris Augusti non responsura lacertis* 'arms that could not match the muscle of Caesar Augustus'), though it was really Antony who won the battle. When he says over twenty years later that he had found favour in war and peace with the first men of the city (*Epistles* 1.20.23), some see a compliment to Brutus;[9] but Philippi was not Horace's only campaign (see below).

6 Lyne (1995) 3n. 7 Fraenkel (1957) 11–12. 8 Note how *duce* picks up *deducte*.
9 Fraenkel (1957) 360.

Epodes and *Satires*

Horace obtained pardon from the victors (*Vita 7 venia impetrata*), but in the confiscations at Venusia (Appian *Bell. Civ.* 4.3) he lost his patrimony (*Epistles* 2.2.50–1). He says jokingly that he turned to verse because of poverty (2.2.51–2);[10] his first satires must belong to this period, 1.7 (a legal process observed by Horace in Asia) and perhaps 1.2 (a discussion of sexual relationships in the Cynic manner). Grandees like Pollio and Messalla expressed approval (*Satires* 1.10.85), and it was perhaps through their subsidies that he acquired the position of *scriba* at the *aerarium* (*Vita* 8, mentioned immediately after his pardon). The office was an important one,[11] and gave Horace a place in the world that gratified his self-esteem (*Satires* 2.6.36–7).

Apart from his early satires, Horace experimented in the manner of Archilochus with a book of *Iambi* (since late antiquity known as *Epodes*), but his ambiguous origin and new-found caution kept him from attacking important people in either genre;[12] he is content with gibes at an anonymous ex-slave who had become a *tribunus militum* (*Epode* 4), a curious way of compensating for the criticisms of himself. Yet among slighter pieces he wrote two impressive political poems, *Epodes* 7 and 16, expressing horror at the renewal of civil war, presumably the Sicilian War against Sextus Pompeius (38–36 BCE);[13] probably 7 was the earlier, as there the war has not yet begun. The pessimism of *Epode* 16 makes a striking contrast with Virgil's *Fourth Eclogue*, which is dated by Pollio's consulship to 40 BCE; some argue for Horace's priority,[14] others more plausibly for Virgil's.[15] The new Sibylline age gave Virgil his organising principle, but Horace's *altera aetas* is inexplicit by comparison and therefore probably derivative.[16] Both epodes allude to the Parthian menace; this points to a time after their calamitous invasion of Syria and Asia Minor in 40 BCE,[17] which recalled the sixth-century Persian assault on Phocaea (16.17–20). Both epodes, particularly 16, seem to be influenced by Sallust's *Histories*;[18] Sertorius' hope of an escape to the Happy Isles (Sallust *Hist.* 1.103 M) was a moral comment on the state of Rome such as

10 For early experiments in Greek verse see *Satires* 1.10.31–5; for a suggested identification with the Flaccus of *Anth. Pal.* 7.542 see Della Corte (1973) 442–50.
11 Fraenkel (1957) 14–15.
12 For criticism in the *Satires* of the unimportant see Rudd (1966) 132–59.
13 Ableitinger and Grünberger (1971) 60–4; Nisbet (1984) 2–3 = (1995a) 163–9; L. Watson (2003) 269–71.
14 Drexler (1935); Wimmel (1953).
15 Snell (1938); Fraenkel (1957) 50–1; L. Watson (2003) 486–8. For extensive bibliography see Setaioli (1981) 1753–62.
16 Nisbet (1984) 2–3 = (1995a) 163–4. 17 Grimal (1961). 18 Syme (1964) 284–6.

we find also in Horace's poem (16.41–66). If Horace is borrowing from the *Histories*, he might have met the first book by 38, but not in 41.

Horace was out of sympathy with current literary movements, whether of archaisers or of late neoterics (*Satires* 1.10.1–19);[19] but he admired the *Eclogues* of Virgil (1.10.44–5), who was no doubt one of the friends to whom he recited his poetry (1.4.73, cf. 1.10.81). Virgil had recently been taken up by Maecenas, who is not mentioned in the *Eclogues*, and now with his fellow poet Varius he introduced Horace to the great man (1.6.54–61). Horace characteristically exaggerates his bashfulness, an unlikely quality for an ambitious soldier, and eight months later, perhaps early in 37 (see below on *Satires* 2.6.40–2), Maecenas admitted him to the circle of his friends (1.6.61–2). There were practical advantages for both men in the relationship: the politician tamed a potential dissident who had shown dangerous impartiality in *Epode* 16,[20] and the poet found the encouragement, psychological as well as material, that so skilful a manipulator could provide.

Horace's first book of *Satires* derives its political interest from what it does not say. In 1.5 he describes a journey to Brundisium with Maecenas, who was on his way to negotiate the Treaty of Tarentum with Antony (37 BCE); by his literary imitations of Lucilius and his emphasis on warm friendships and trivial mishaps, Horace artfully conceals any political involvement.[21] In 1.9 he tells how a social climber tried to exploit his new friendship with Maecenas (43–60); but his indignant protests themselves show an eagerness to please (48–9 *non isto vivimus illic / quo tu rere modo* 'we don't live there in the way you think'). In 1.6, his most autobiographical poem, he gives an attractive and no doubt exaggerated picture of his simple life (104–31) as he potters around the market and asks the price of vegetables; he thus tries to avert the malice that attended his new success. The thrust of the book is ethical, and in the opening address to Maecenas (1.1) the theme of 'contentment with one's lot' is not just an expression of gratitude but a denial of larger ambitions. The book seems to have been issued about 35 or 34, before Horace's acquisition of his Sabine estate.

The epodes, similarly, become less political for a time. Horace was nearly drowned in the Sicilian War (*Odes* 3.4.28 *nec (me extinxit) Sicula Palinurus unda* 'nor did Palinurus extinguish me with Sicilian waters'); this refers to the storm that wrecked Octavian's fleet off Capo Palinuro in 36,[22] and as Maecenas was present (Appian *Bell. Civ.* 5.99) Horace was presumably in attendance, but in the *Epodes* he says nothing about it. When the tenth

19 Nisbet (1995b) 391–7. 20 Otherwise Griffin (1993) 13.
21 Griffin (1984) 197–8; Du Quesnay (1984) 39–43; Lyne (1995) 17–19.
22 Wistrand (1958) 16–17 = (1972) 304–5.

poem promises an offering to the storm-winds if Mevius is drowned, that reminds us of Octavian's dedication to the winds at Anzio (*ILS* 3279, Appian *Bell. Civ.* 5.48), but typically Horace's enemy is not a man of power but a bad poet (Virgil, *Eclogues* 3.90). When he says that Cupid keeps him from finishing his book of epodes (14.6–8), the excuse means that he is turning to the uncontroversial erotic themes (11 and 15) that were to lead to lyric.

The poems on the hag Canidia (*Epodes* 5 and 17, *Satires* 1.8) are sometimes thought to show personal acquaintanceship with low life, but the series cannot be put back to a time before success had mellowed the poet; *Epode* 3, which mentions the woman, is addressed to Maecenas, and *Satires* 1.8 begins with his renovation of the Esquiline cemetery. Horace talks as if she was a real person (*Epodes* 5.41–8, 17.23, *Satires* 2.1.48), and the ancient commentator Porphyrio alleges that her real name was Gratidia (on *Epode* 3.7); imaginative reconstructions have been attempted, but *Epodes* 5 is too gruesome to be plausible, *Epodes* 17 too literary, and *Satires* 1.8 too farcical. At *Epodes* 5.21–2, where she is described as handling poisons from Hiberia (south of the Caucasus), there is a political gibe that may help to account for her name: Canidius Crassus, suffect consul 40, a leading Antonian and bitter enemy of Octavian, conquered Hiberia in 36 (Plutarch *Antony* 34.10).[23]

The second book of *Satires* continues to dissociate Horace from the political world: the amusing discussion of satire (2.1) is in Rudd's phrase 'shadow-boxing', and the criticisms of gastronomic experts (2.4) and legacy-hunters (2.5), where the poet plays a minimal role, are not related to important individuals. In spite of his display of modesty and simplicity, as when he compares himself to a country mouse (2.6.79–117), we learn that Horace was an *eques Romanus*, perhaps as a result of his position at the *aerarium*; this is made clear when the slave Davus alludes to the poet's equestrian ring (2.7.53). At some stage Maecenas presented Horace with an estate near Licenza in the Sabine hills (2.6.1–5); this gave him not only respite from time-consuming obligations in Rome (2.6.23–39), but a continuing income from his five tenants (*Epistles* 1.14.2–3). He was now bound firmly to the regime by ties of gratitude and loyalty, an important consideration in the crisis that threatened.

It is disputed whether Horace was present at the battle of Actium in 31 BCE,[24] when Octavian defeated Antony and Cleopatra. This corresponds to the disagreement of the sources about Maecenas' whereabouts: the first

23 See Nisbet (1984) 9 = (1995a) 170–1; L. Watson (2003) 197–8.

24 In favour see Wistrand (1972) 293–351; Kraggerud (1984) 66–128; Nisbet (1984) 9–17 = (1995) 171–81. Against, Fraenkel (1957) 71–5. For further bibliography see Setaioli (1981) 1716–28.