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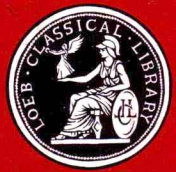
HORACE

ODES AND EPODES



Edited and Translated by

NIALL RUDD

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PREFACE

This volume replaces C. E. Bennett's Loeb edition, which served teachers and students well for most of the twentieth century. Bennett was an accomplished Latinist, and it is no criticism to observe that after nearly ninety years his text and interpretations have at some points become outdated, and that especially in the "hymnic" odes his style now seems old-fashioned. Like Bennett's, the present translation is intended to serve as a guide to the Latin printed *en face*; yet too literal a version would produce a jarringly false effect; so the result is something of a compromise. Any prose rendering, of course, involves loss, and in the case of the *Odes*, where form counts for as much as content, the loss is especially regrettable. Yet a version in quatrains or couplets, like that of James Michie, however agreeable in itself, cannot remain close to the original. David West's translation, sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse, is always lively, and Guy Lee's policy of reproducing Horace's metres is an impressive extension of J. B. Leishman's experiment. But, as anyone who has ever tried will admit, there can be no wholly satisfactory solution. I offer this attempt to readers, whatever their needs, in the hope that it will convey, to a worthwhile degree, the meaning and spirit of a writer whose rise to fame was highly unusual, and who conveyed the outlook of the "normal civil-

ised man" in poetry that was quite exceptional. As Quintilian observed in the first century A.D., "Of our lyric poets Horace is pretty well the only one worth reading. He rises at times to grandeur, and is full of pleasantness and charm. There is great variety in his figures of speech, and his boldness in the choice of words is equalled only by his felicity" (*Inst. Orat.* X.1.96).

This translation is based on the Oxford Text of E. C. Wickham, revised by H. W. Garrod, Oxford 1912. Significant departures are indicated at the bottom of each page; where these are conjectures, as in I.2.39, the name of the proposer is added, the Oxford reading being recorded on the right; where they are variant readings, as in I.8.2, the manuscript sources can be found in the Oxford Text, in the Teubners of F. Klingner (1959) and D. R. Shackleton Bailey (1985), or in the Paravia edition by Lenchantin de Gubernatis, revised by D. Bo (1958); the Oxford reading again is recorded on the right. When the Oxford reading is retained, occasionally another reading is noted on the right. If that reading is a conjecture, as in I.5.16, its proposer is recorded; if it is a variant, as in IV.7.15, its source can be discovered in the editions mentioned above.

The volume retains the traditional order, i.e. Odes (*Carmina*), Hymn for a New Age (*Carmen Saeculare*), Epodes (*Iambi*); for although the Epodes are the earliest compositions, they are less often consulted. The titles of the poems have been supplied by the translator. Footnotes have been provided where they were needed to clarify the sense. For proper names the reader should consult the Index of Names, which serves as a glossary.

It remains to record my thanks to the late G. P. Goold, and to Professors R. G. M. Nisbet, Richard Thomas, Zeph

Stewart, and Jeffrey Henderson for their comments on earlier drafts, and to Professor Frederick Williams for helping with the proofs. The shortcomings, as usual, are the author's.

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INTRODUCTION

In 88 B.C. the town of Venusia, on the borders of Apulia and Lucania, which had sided with the Italian Allies in their struggle against Rome, was stormed, and more than 3,000 prisoners were taken (Diodorus 37.2.10). That may have been the occasion when Horace's father, probably still a minor, became a slave. Although he was subsequently emancipated, and was free at the time of Horace's birth (December 8, 65 B.C.), the poet had to endure the sneer that he was "the son of a freedman" (*Sat.* I.6.6,45,46; *Epist.* I.20.20). His mother is not mentioned; perhaps he never knew her.

In spite of these tragic events, Horace's father had made sufficient money as an auctioneer's agent to enable him to take his boy away from Venusia, where the local school was attended by the swaggering sons of Roman centurions (*Sat.* I.6.72–5), and to have him educated in the capital at a fashionable school, where he mixed with the sons of the upper class. At that time (the 50's) Rome was plagued by gang warfare between Caesarians (led by Clodius) and Pompeians (led by Milo), which eventually led to the civil war (49–45). Then came the assassination of Caesar, after which Brutus left Italy to raise an army in the East. In Athens he recruited Horace, who was attending university in Athens along with several young aristocrats.

Despite his lack of experience Horace was made a military tribune, and before long took part in the disastrous battle of Philippi on the Via Egnatia in Macedonia (42 B.C.). Antony won the day, and Horace was lucky to escape with his life. Returning to Rome under an amnesty, he managed to acquire a secretaryship in the treasury. This gave him enough to live on, and he began to write poetry in earnest.

Soon, on the strength of some early epodes and satires, Vergil and Varius introduced him to Maecenas, and he entered the great patron's circle early in 37 B.C. In that year he accompanied Maecenas on a journey south (*Sat.* I.5). He was also probably with him when, in the struggle against Sextus Pompeius, Octavian's fleet suffered a serious setback off Cape Palinurus (*Odes* III.4.28). Later he affirmed his willingness to accompany Maecenas to Actium (*Epod.* 1), and may actually have done so (*Epod.* 9). If he did, that would have added further force to *Odes* II.6.7–8, where in addressing an old comrade-in-arms he claims to be "weary of the sea and marching and fighting." So, like many others who grew up in the last generation of the Republic, Horace was all too familiar with death and danger. Perhaps that was one reason why he felt such an affinity with the old warrior Alcaeus (see below).

Though he was doubtless wary of Octavian (Augustus after 27 B.C.), Horace recognised that he had brought peace and the hope of recovery. To most sections of the populace Augustus also brought greater freedom, namely the provincials, the equites, and the plebs. True, the power of the senate was broken beyond repair, but Horace may never have had much enthusiasm for the old oligarchic system (see, e.g., *Sat.* I.6).

A few years after joining Maecenas' circle Horace re-

ceived from his patron the present of a sizeable estate in the hills beyond Tibur (Tivoli). It had a household staff of eight, and was worked by five families who paid him rent. This was an enormous boon, and the poet took full advantage of it. He also stayed from time to time in Tibur, Praeneste, Baiae, Velia, Tarentum, and no doubt other scenic areas. But he still spent much of his time in Rome, where he came to know many of the most important figures. When their names appear in the *Odes* (Agrippa, Pollio, Messalla, and the rest) that is not merely a sign that the social climber has now reached the top (as his detractors would have put it), but also that he has favoured them with a much coveted tribute, for which, like a fashionable portrait painter, he has doubtless received an appropriate fee (cf. II.18.10–11).

THE ODES

Horace takes pride in being the first Roman to write a body of lyric poetry. These poems are explicitly based on the work of Greek writers (I.1.35, 32.3ff.; III.30.13–14; IV.3.23), Alcaeus above all, but also Sappho and, in the case of the major public odes, Pindar; another source was Greek epigram. But whatever their origin or their point of departure, the poems are almost always set in a Roman context. Thus I.37 opens with a direct quotation from a poem of Alcaeus which hailed the death of a tyrant; but the celebration is a Roman one, and the defeated figure is Cleopatra. The poem's dramatic date is just after the news of her suicide (August 30 B.C.) reached Rome. Nearly all (perhaps all) of the odes in the first collection belong to the period between then and 23.

Books I–III

Eleven of the eighty-eight pieces in Books I–III are public poems on patriotic themes, upholding the traditional values of courage, constancy, loyalty, and piety which the new regime was keen to restore. These values had been articulated and confirmed in the kind of Stoicism brought to Rome in the mid second century by the Greek Panaetius, and transmitted to later generations by Cicero. As for the religious dimension, the deities are the age-old Roman counterparts of the Olympians; and they could be invoked and described by Horace in his capacity as the priest of the Muses (III.1.2) or sacred bard (I.31.2; III.6.2). Privately, he was not a believer. When, for instance, he says that Augustus will eventually drink nectar with the gods (III.3.11–12), he himself would have accepted this only as a reference to the Emperor's enduring fame; after death all men, however powerful, were dust and shadow (IV.7.16). Yet the survival of the great and the good was affirmed by Stoic thinkers and was, of course, later compatible with Christian theology. The finest of the public poems, then, have been admired for their dignity and rhetorical force, and over the years many readers have regarded them as Horace's greatest achievement.

The large majority of the pieces, however, are on private themes. Several are addressed to friends, now inviting or greeting or praising them, now chiding or counselling or consoling. Epicurus' influence is felt here and there, but in many cases Horace draws from the large area where the various schools overlap. In themselves the ideas are simple, amounting to no more than sensible advice on coping with life. But when conveyed as they are in I.4, II.3,10,14,

and III.29, they have an ageless power; for as a later poet (also a consummate Latinist) said, "The troubles of our proud and angry dust / Are from eternity and shall not fail" (A. E. Housman, *Last Poems,* IX).

In writing about love, Horace comments on the concerns of other people, or reflects on his own past affairs; but he rarely speaks of being in love at the moment. When he does, the emotion is not deeply felt, or, if it is, it does not appear to have lasted for long. What the odes do project is a half-tender, half-ironical attitude towards love (including his own), which observes its vagaries and locates it within a general pattern of experience. Whether because of age or temperament, it never had the consuming intensity that it had for Catullus. Precedents will be found rather in Anacreon and the epigrams of the Greek Anthology. In love, as in friendship, happiness is enhanced and sadness consoled by wine. The other important link is music, by which Horace meant lyric poetry itself. This endeared him to other men and women, and at the same time set him apart. Inspiration was his greatest blessing, yet its origins were mysterious and its coming unpredictable. So he welcomed it as, in a very real sense, a divine gift.

Horace himself must have prepared the poems for publication; yet the principles of arrangement are only occasionally obvious. Thus I.1 (aspiration) and III.30 (achievement), and only they, are in Asclepiads throughout; I.1–9 represent a parade of different metres, and the first three bring together the three most important figures in the poet's life (Maecenas, Augustus, and Vergil); Maecenas begins both the first and the second half of Book I; Book II, nos. 1–11, at the centre of the collection, alternate between Alcaics and Sapphics; III.1–6 are all in Alcaics; II.20 on the

poet's achievement foreshadows III.30. A few other correspondences could probably be adduced, but in general the more detailed the proposals for schematic patterns are, the more unconvincing they appear.

Hymn for a New Age

Occasional glimpses of what Horace was doing in the years after 23 B.C. can be obtained from Book I of the *Epistles*. There we find him reading Homer in Praeneste, addressing young writers who are campaigning in the East with Tiberius, cheering up an Albius who is probably the elegist Tibullus, entertaining an aristocratic barrister, writing a reference, describing his estate and chatting with his agent, setting off to convalesce on the coast, asserting his originality as a poet, and ridiculing his imitators. Most interesting, perhaps, is no. 7, in which he firmly establishes independence from Maecenas, who has been missing his company and complaining about his long absences. This may remind us of an earlier occasion, recorded by Suetonius, when he declined a request from the Emperor that he should become his personal secretary. Such episodes indicate how unfair it is to describe the poet simply as a client who obtained favours from his patrons in return for flattery.

Horace intended Odes III.30 to mark the end of his lyric phase. His friends, however, had other ideas. Late in 20 B.C., or perhaps early in 19, Maecenas tried to persuade him to resume (*Epist.* I.1.1–11), and later in 19 Julius Florus tried again (*Epist.* II.2.24–5). These attempts could be deflected, but an official request from the Emperor, attested by Suetonius in his *Life of Horace*, was another mat-

ter. This request, which presumably arrived in 18 B.C., was for a choral hymn to accompany the ceremonies scheduled to take place in the spring of 17. Held ten years after the settlement of 27 B.C., these ceremonies would mark the achievements of the Augustan regime and inaugurate a new age (*saeculum*) in Roman history. The length of the *saeculum* was here envisaged as 110 years (line 21). Full accounts of the celebrations are available in Warde Fowler (439–47) and Fraenkel (364–82). The hymn was performed by a choir of young girls and boys in honour of the gods, especially Apollo (associated with the sun) and Diana (associated with the moon). The symbolism of the hymn has its counterpart on the Ara Pacis and the breastplate of the Prima Porta Augustus; see Zanker, figs.136 and 148b.

Book IV

To judge from the reference in IV.6.31–44, the centennial celebrations seem to have given Horace the impetus to start another book of odes. If so, the idea was confirmed when Augustus asked him to extol the military achievements of his stepsons, Drusus and Tiberius, against the Alpine tribes. These tribes, in particular the Raeti of the Tirol and the Vindelici of Bavaria and Eastern Switzerland, were blocking the passes to troops and traders, and conducting raids into northern Italy. If the passes could be cleared, that would shorten Rome's communications and enable a frontier to be established along the Danube. In 15 B.C., after defeating the Vindelici (IV.4), Drusus advanced through the Resia (Reschenscheideck) and Brenner passes into the valley of the Inn. At the same time Tiberius marched east from Lake Constance. On August 1st the

brothers joined forces and overwhelmed the remaining tribesmen who offered resistance (IV.14). "Italy at length had peace from their inroads . . . Cisalpine Gaul could now become in the fullest sense part of Italy"—so observes Syme, quite correctly.[1] Yet Horace hints at the cost when he speaks of "hearts that were determined to die in freedom" (IV.14.18). Odes 5 and 15 anticipate the return of Augustus from Spain and Gaul in 13 B.C. No.1 formally introduces the collection. The main body of the poem is concerned with the young aristocrat Paullus Fabius Maximus, who is shortly to marry Augustus' cousin. This acts as a prelude to the praises of the new generation of public men: Iullus Antonius (2), Drusus and Tiberius (4 and 14), Censorinus (8). These poems, like 5 and 15 (Augustus) and 9 (Lollius), are public and positive. No. 1, however, has also a second function. Whether or not it marks a resurgence of sexual desire, it certainly signals a renewal of love poetry, albeit of a muted and nostalgic kind. The relevant pieces include nos. 10 (Ligurinus), 11 (Phyllis), and 13 (Cinara, and Lyce as she once was); as private odes they go along with those addressed to Torquatus (7) and Vergil (12). Both the public and the private groups are connected, as in the earlier collection, by the theme of poetry or song, which accounts for half of 2 and 6, most of 9, and the whole of 3 and 8. No. 8 occupies the centre of the collection and by its metre recalls I.1 and III.30. Along with 9, it modifies the deep pessimism of no.7: there is, after all, one thing that survives death, namely art.

These poems take us to within a few years of the end.

[1] *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 1st ed., vol. x, p. 349.

Although it is clear that the Emperor is now Horace's chief patron, his old friend Maecenas is not forgotten (11.19). Maecenas died at the end of September 8 B.C., and in his will he gave an instruction to Augustus: "Remember Horatius Flaccus as you remember me." As if recalling what he had said in II.17.10–12 ("We are ready to set out on the final journey as comrades together"), Horace followed on November 27th. They buried him near Maecenas on the Esquiline Hill.

THE EPODES

The *Epodes* (or *Iambi*, as Horace would have called them) were published in 30 B.C. They were written at various times in the previous decade, but give few indications of date. No. 7 tells us that a new civil war is about to start. Horace could have made this statement before the pact of Brundisium in October 40 B.C. at a time when Antony's troops were in southern Italy and a full-scale war between himself and Octavian seemed imminent, or in 39 before the outbreak of war between Octavian and Pompey's son, Sextus Pompeius. The same theme recurs in the first part of the magnificent no. 16. But as the war has now begun, and this is a much more elaborate poem, one naturally puts it later than no. 7. Both, however, appear to have been written in this early period, for no.16 is closely connected with Vergil's fourth eclogue, which belongs to 40 B.C. (This view is argued by R. G. M. Nisbet in Woodman and West, pp. 1–7). Other scholars put the pieces much later: before and after Actium (31 B.C.) respectively (see pp. 143 and 244 of Mankin's commentary). But once Horace had

thrown in his lot with Maecenas and Octavian in 37 B.C. he was clearly committed to their cause, as in *Epodes* 1 and 9, whereas nos. 7 and 16 deliver an entirely general condemnation. No. 10 may also belong to the early 30's, for Mevius, too, seems to come from the world of Vergil's *Eclogues* (see *Ecl.* 3.90). Nos. 3 and 14 must be later than the early part of 37, when Horace became Maecenas' client. No. 4 refers to the war against Sextus Pompeius (39–36 B.C.), to judge from the mention of "brigands and slaves" in line 19. It is reasonable to put no. 5 in the same period as *Satires* 1.8: about 36 B.C.; for Canidia and Sagana also appear in that poem. The other Canidia piece (no. 17) came after the satire, for line 58 refers to the setting on the Esquiline (*Sat.* 1.8.14) and the wax dolls (76) refer to that mentioned in *Satires* 1.8.30 and 43. Nos. 1 and 9 were written just before and immediately after Actium.

Within the collection, one assumes that no. 12 is earlier than no. 11, for at 12.15 Inachia is said to be Horace's mistress, whereas at 11.5–6 the affair has been over for two years. This indicates that the pieces are not arranged in strict chronological order (nor, indeed, is it plausible to suggest that nos. 2–8 were all written between 1 and 9). No. 9 is placed exactly in the middle, giving Maecenas the prominence that he was to enjoy in *Odes* I.20. The two parts are connected by thematic links between 1 and 9 (Actium), 2 and 16.41–66 (idealised country life), 5 and 17 (Canidia), 7 and 16.1–34 (civil war), 8 and 12 (an aging woman). But, as usual, there is no symmetrical pattern.

The genre in which Horace was working is made explicit in *Epistles* 1.19.23–5: "I was the first to show the iambics of Paros to Latium, keeping Archilochus' rhythms