

XV.—Horace and the Elegists

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This paper is summarized in the last paragraph.

The evidence for Horace's attitude toward amatory elegy has, heretofore, been supposed to consist of certain references (in his Odes and Epistles) to Tibullus and Propertius.¹ These are not in themselves explicit enough to warrant any definite conclusion; while they seem, on their face, depreciatory if not hostile they can be and have been interpreted in quite another sense. To this evidence Immisch and Higham² have added the scant allusions to elegy in the *Ars Poetica*; here again it is difficult to reach any certainty. The object of this paper is to direct attention to the crucial importance of the early satires (especially 1.10) for a solution of the problem.

The exegesis of these early satires (i.e. 1.4 and 1.10) is difficult because we lack the information which Horace clearly assumed on the part of his contemporaries; we miss the point of his innuendoes and fail to read between the lines as he obviously intended us to do. On the surface he seems to be attacking a coterie of literary light-weights gathered around such obvious malcontents as Valerius Cato and Furius Bibaculus. They object to his use of the satiric model, Lucilius (especially to his abandonment of the Lucilian invective or personal attack and the use of Greek words). They are always, he says, harping on Catullus and Calvus and *their* literary practice. He, however, is no ape-like imitator (even of Catullus) and is quite content with the approval of a large list of contemporaries who by their public and literary reputation make his opponents seem like lice in comparison.

The question at issue here is whether this is really all there is to it. Are such people as Pantilius, Hermogenes, Ticidas and Demetrius mere nobodies and is their ape-like harping on the names of Catullus and Calvus a merely insolent misuse of authors whom

¹ See below, pp. 185–189.

² Cf. T. F. Higham "Ovid: Some Aspects of His Character and Aims," *CR* 48 (1934) 105–116, and O. Immisch, "Horazens Epistel über die Dichtkunst," *Ph* 24 (1932) 1–185.

Horace really reveres? The answer of several prominent modern scholars — notably of Rand, Jackson and Ullman³ — has been in the affirmative. There was no quarrel between Catullus and the Augustans (such as Horace and Virgil), declares Rand, citing in evidence a number of Catullan phrases in Horace. The offensive word *decantare* does not mean 'harp on' or 'reiterate' but 'satirize,' claims Ullman. Horace is pleading *for* the stylistic practice of Calvus, urges Jackson, and therefore could hardly depreciate him. To such *exegetis*, Ogle and Hendrickson⁴ have demurred quite effectively, in my opinion. I shall not here attempt to retrace or even recapitulate Hendrickson's very able articles on the subject. The point he makes is that those "nobodies" really represent the chief survivors of the Catullan school — that is to say the *poetae novi* or neoterics — for both invective and the use of grecisms is the very trade mark of this school. It is also quite evident that they dominated the *collegium poetarum* or poets' guild which met in the temple of Minerva on the Aventine.⁵ They were thus in no sense a group of nobodies. Nevertheless their position was extremely insecure: their dubious political past and their failure to redeem it was distinctly against them.⁶ They could not, therefore, come out into

³ Cf. E. K. Rand, "Catullus and the Augustans," *HSPH* 17 (1906) 15–30; C. Jackson, "Molle atque Facetum," *HSPH* 25 (1914) 117–137, and B. L. Ullman, "Horace, Catullus and Tigellius," *CPh* 10 (1915) 270–96.

⁴ Cf. M. B. Ogle, "Horace an Atticist," *CPh* 11 (1916) 156–168, and G. L. Hendrickson, "Horace and Valerius Cato," *CPh* 11 (1916) 249–69, 12 (1917) 77–92, 329–50.

⁵ Cf. *Serm.* 1.10.36–39 and the note in Lejay's *Oeuvres d'Horace: Satires* (Paris, 1911) 271. The *collegium poetarum* at this time must have been both a school of sorts and a center of literary criticism. The *grammatici* or *litteratores* who belonged to it were no ordinary pedagogues although Horace naturally gives this impression in the satire. Suetonius (*Gramm.* 11) quotes the high praise given Cato by Bibaculus: "Cato grammaticus, Latina Siren qui solus legit ac facit poetas" and Suetonius himself refers (*Gramm.* 4) to Cato as "poetam simul grammaticumque notissimum." As De Quincey rightly says (*The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* [Everyman Ed.] 47), "Those 'grammatici' . . . were not grammarians at all, but what the French by a comprehensive term call litterateurs." The aspersions that Horace brought against the *grammaticus tribus* (*Epist.* 1.19.39–40) were typical of his aristocratic exclusiveness (cf. *Serm.* 1.4.21–25, 73; 2.1.74–6; *Epist.* 1.19.35 f.; C. 3.1.1) and reëcho the charges brought by Antiphanes against Callimachus and his school. Cf. note 8 below.

⁶ For *Furius Bibaculus* cf. Tacitus *Ann.* 4.34: *Carmina Bibaculi et Catulli referta contumeliis Caesarum leguntur: sed ipse divus Iulius, ipse divus Augustus et tulere ista et reliquere.* That Cato and Tigidas were associated in this respect with Bibaculus seems indicated in Messala's public repudiation of the whole crowd (i.e. Bibaculus, Tigidas, Cato). See Suet. *Gramm.* 4. Doubtless Messala — well known as an independent man, quite friendly to the elegists and neoterics — was under some pressure to show that he "had nothing to do" (*non esse sibi rem*) with these people. Cf. note 18 below.

the open: they had to hide themselves behind the name of Lucilius and defend their own principles in terms of his. Horace, of course, saw the strategic weakness of such a position and made shrewd use of it.⁷

If this interpretation of the satire is correct, it sheds a good deal of new light on the attitude of Horace to elegy. Hendrickson did not apparently see this, since he was concerned solely with the two features of neotericism (invective and grecisms) directly attacked by Horace. These, however, were by no means the *only* two features of neotericism that Horace disliked. It is clear that Horace also objected to their exclusive use of *minor* or "little" genres and their indifference to the ethical and patriotic purposes of Augustus. Some of his references to the neoterics are, as Higham has pointed out, intentional echoes of the epigrams with which Antiphanes assailed Callimachus and his school.⁸ In other words, Horace is reviving, under somewhat different circumstances, the famous quarrel of Callimachus and Apollonius over the claims of "big" and "little" books or of epic versus the newer and minor genres. This is shown even more clearly by his use of the adjective *molle* as applied to Virgil's bucolics and to elegy; Jackson is quite right in assuming that *molle* in *molle atque facetum* implies a definite contrast with the higher and nobler style of epic, though he curiously interprets this implication of *molle* as evidence of Horace's agreement with the very neoteric poets whom he is obviously opposing and depreciating.⁹ The much more probable — in my opinion almost certain —

⁷ It is apparent throughout this satire that Horace is not dealing with the literary reactionaries he was concerned with, for example, in the Epistle to Augustus (*Epist.* 2.1). Cato was even preparing to emend the bad lines of Lucilius as Horace observes. I would agree with Hendrickson (*CPh* 11 [1916] 249–69) in accepting the eight lines prefixed to the satire in MSS F, L, b (in which the reference to Cato occurs) as genuine.

⁸ Cf. Higham, *op. cit.* (see note 2). Compare Antiphanes (*A.P.* 11.322), referring to the *grammatici* who were friends of Callimachus: ποιητῶν λῶβαι, παῖσι σκότος ἀρχομένοισιν, ἔρροιτ' εὐφώνων λαβροδάκναι κόριες with Horace (*Serm.* 1.10.78): *Men' moveat cimex Pantilius, aut cruciet quod vellicet absentem Demetrius*. It is clear that Horace is simply bringing against the *poetae-grammatici* of his day the same charges brought against the Callimacheans: cf. *A.P.* 11.20 with *Epist.* 1.19.1–3, 39–40. The same old abuse of Callimachus and his friends is here revived against the *poetae novi*: this greatly, in my opinion, reinforces the point of this paper, that Horace is attacking the *neoterici* as "Alexandrines," — specifically as defenders of the "little" or minor genres.

⁹ Cf. Jackson, *op. cit.* (see note 3), and Ogle, *op. cit.* (see note 4). In general I would agree with Ogle's position. The difficulties that Jackson's interpretation of *molle atque facetum* involve proceed more or less directly from his stated premise (118): "Amid all these uncertainties, ancient and modern, one fact stands out as well nigh

explanation is that Horace is arguing for a revival of the greater genres (especially epic and tragedy but also lyric) both as intrinsically better and nobler than the smaller genres (e.g. the little epics, and most elegiac writing) and as much more adequate vehicles of the Augustan greatness and *gravitas*. This revived classicism (if it can be called that) did not of course mean any frigid and blanket disapproval of everything that was not an epic or a tragedy; it meant rather a shift of emphasis from the minor to the major both in form and in subject matter.¹⁰

Now the only important literary movement which really opposed this shift was that of the amatory elegists. And there can be no doubt that amatory elegy was — in the Augustan age — the residuary legatee of neotericism. This does not mean that Roman amatory elegy was merely a paraphrase of a prior Alexandrine elegy and that there was therefore no break in the development of Roman

incontestable, and that is, that these terms *molle atque facetum* are rhetorical and relate to certain stylistic qualities in the poetry of Virgil." His equation of poetry and rhetoric or oratory then leads him to the conclusion that *molle atque facetum* refers to the style of the *atticists* Brutus, Pollio and Calvus and that Horace is *arguing* for the style of the *poetae novi*. Jackson, citing Rand, *op. cit.* (see note 3), declares: "With the poets also who affected the new style of poetic art and with the literary tendencies which Catullus, Calvus and others represented, Horace and Virgil were familiar and sympathetic." I fail utterly to see how such a conclusion can be drawn from this satire (*Serm.* 1.10) with its clear animus against *all* the surviving *poetae novi* (i.e. Bibaculus, Cato, Tigidas, etc.). Horace's *molle atque facetum* probably means merely what the obvious sense of the words indicates: "tenderness and playfulness" or "softness and graceful humor." Horace's attitude toward Virgil here is I think one of tender depreciation: like his own *sermone*s, Virgil's bucolics are lowly and of no great rank *qua* genre. I think Jackson is quite right in arguing that *molle* implies a contrast with the higher style of epic (123 f.) but this contrast is due to Horace's hierarchical doctrine of the genres, not to any rhetorical theory. See, in this connection, Lejay, *op. cit.* (see note 5) 101–103, 256, and Horace himself, *Serm.* 1.4.39–48, *Epist.* 2.1.250–270. Also compare *molle* in *molle atque facetum* with *mollium* (*C.* 2.9.17). *Molle* applied to elegy doubtless corresponded to *exiguos* (*Ars* 77) thus expressing the "minor" or subordinate status of the genre (cf. below, 186). Jackson cites in this connection the apposite line of Domitius Marsus (*FPR* 348):

Te quoque Vergilio comitem non aequa, Tibulle,
mors iuvenem campos misit ad Elysios,
ne foret, aut elegis molles qui fleret amores
aut caneret forti regia pede,

where the contrast of *forti* and *molles* is apparent.

¹⁰ This point is well made both by Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age: Horace and the Elegiac Poets* (Oxford, 1892) and by Heinze, *Die Augusteische Kultur* (Leipzig, 1930). See especially Sellar 23 and Heinze 122–3. The reaction against the "official" view (of both Horace and Maecenas as well as — inferentially — Augustus) is apparent in all the elegists but pre-eminently so in Ovid. I have commented on this in some detail in my article, "Ovid and the Augustans," *TAPhA* 69 (1938) 207–211.

Alexandrinism between the era of Catullus and of Ovid. I have argued elsewhere for the theory — upheld by such scholars as Jacoby, Wilamowitz, Weinreich and Wheeler — that the elegy of Tibullus and his successors was in fact a new genre whose creator — in so far as it had one — was Cornelius Gallus.¹¹ It was, however, even less adaptable to the Horatian program than the neoteric poetry from which it came. This was due both to the elegists' Alexandrine indifference to the great genres and to their lack of sympathy with the new Augustan patriotism and morality. The same reasons, therefore, which brought Horace to oppose the neoterics brought him to oppose elegy.

The first proof of this is to be found in the very satire (1.10) we have been considering (i.e. the significant omission of Gallus' name). In this satire he gives two lists of his friends.¹² The first is the list of writers (Fundanius in Comedy, Pollio in History, Varius in Epic, Virgil in Bucolic) to whom Horace adds himself in his capacity of satirist (his own genre). They are quite definitely opposed to the *collegium poetarum*. The second list is much more inclusive: it includes all who "approve" Horace's work and whom he can therefore cite against the dispraise of the *cimex* Pantilius, Demetrius, the *ineptus* Fannius, Tigellius and such ilk. It is reasonably plain that Horace is here citing almost all the big names he can muster, though he prudently adds: *compluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos prudens praetereo* (87-8). No one can cite all his friends and this remark at least provides some defense against the charge of indifference. Nevertheless it is not an adequate explanation of the omission of certain very well known authors of the day. Specifically, Horace quite ignores the names of M. Terentius Varro and Cornelius Gallus. The omission of Varro is easily explained: he belonged to an older

¹¹ Cf. my discussion, *TAPhA* 69 (1938) 194-196. E. Martini, "Ovid und seine Bedeutung für die Römische Poesie," *Επιτύμβιον Heinrich Swoboda dargebracht* (Prague, 1927) 177-178, clearly brings out the distinction between Virgil's and Horace's *μίμησις τῶν ἀρχαίων Ἑλλήνων* and the neotericism of the elegists. His error, in my opinion, is to minimize the elegists' originality and Roman quality by his somewhat incritical adherence to Leo's theory of the origin of amatory elegy. I am convinced that a wholly fresh treatment of (a) the "quarrel" of Callimachus and Apollonius, (b) the influence of Alexandrines on the Neoterics and (c) the new status of neotericism in the Augustan age, is greatly needed. I do not myself subscribe to a recent tendency to minimize the literary consequences of the rift between Callimachus and Apollonius of which the recent article by W. Allen Jr. ("The Epyllion: A Chapter in the History of Literary Criticism," *TAPhA* 71 [1940] 6-12) is a good instance.

¹² The first is given in lines 40-45; the second in lines 81-88.

generation and his Menippean Satires were a youthful work which had exercised no appreciable influence, because of their great obscurity and parade of erudition. The omission of Gallus is not so easily explained. In the year 35 he was undoubtedly one of the leading poets of the day as well as a distinguished public figure. It is thus quite impossible to account for Gallus' absence from this list on the ground of mere lack of space or inadvertence. But in the light of our discussion so far the reason for the omission is easily seen. Gallus was, in the first place, fully identified with the old and young neoterics: he was on intimate terms with Valerius Cato and Bibaculus; he was clearly also the most Euphorionic of all the *cantores Euphorionis*; and he was the inventor of a new and popular genre whose form and subject matter were definitely not of the sort acceptable to the classicism of Horace and his circle. On the other hand, he was a man of some prominence — a man whom Augustus could make prefect of Egypt and whom Virgil looked upon as a patron and friend. It was thus not possible to name him in company with his déclassé friends Bibaculus and Cato. It would, however, have seemed rather foolish to put him in the opposite list since his literary *parti pris* was too well known. Horace, therefore, simply omitted him altogether.¹³

It is true that *argumenta ex silentio* are justly suspect. Never-

¹³ Cf. the discussion of the omission of Gallus in Lejay, *op. cit.* (see note 5) 255, who takes a somewhat similar view: "Gallus est un imitateur d'Euphorion, du plus compliqué et du plus obscur des Alexandrins: c'en est assez pour qu'Horace l'ait rangé parmi les continuateurs de Catulle et de Calvus. S'il l'épargne, on doit croire que l'amitié de Virgile est l'unique raison de son silence." Hendrickson seems to supply a somewhat different reason (*CPh* 12 [1917] 84): "Horace follows the principle, which I have noted above, of keeping from his pages satirical mention of more important personages. In purpose and intention the words are aimed at larger game; but either from motives of restraint, or from some principle of exclusion, the humble followers are made to take the place of the master." The reference here is mainly to Valerius Cato, but "important personages" would apply to Gallus. I do not see any especial mystery about Horace's "principle of exclusion." The fact is that literary, political, and social distinctions cut across each other (e.g. Virgil, the friend of Gallus, was also a friend of Maecenas and Horace himself) and that Horace naturally attacked openly only those who were notoriously hostile to his group or to Augustus. This was certainly true of Bibaculus, with whom Gallus was rather closely associated, as we can see from the poem which Bibaculus addressed to him (Baehrens, *FPR* 317). There was, however, a tendency for the literary, social and political to coincide — a tendency which Horace undoubtedly sensed and seemingly furthered. Nevertheless it is important to distinguish the political opposition of Bibaculus — and probably Cato and Tigidas — (see note 6 above) from the quite different opposition of the elegists which culminated in Ovid. One opposition furthered the other but the first is overt and political, the second is covert and social.

theless this *argumentum ex silentio* is much stronger than most: its strength consists in the obvious inclusiveness of Horace's lists and in the equally obvious prominence of Gallus. If these facts are taken in conjunction with the undoubted neoteric record of Gallus, the argument seems to me to be convincing indeed.

What bearing, then, does it have on the other evidence for Horace's hostility to elegy? The answer, I think, is that it gives it a cumulative force and a precision of meaning which it has heretofore lacked.

The main allusion to elegy in the *Ars Poetica* occurs in lines 75-78, where elegy is listed after epic and before iambic satire, tragedy, comedy and lyric in that order. The subject matter of elegy is here confined to the dirge or lament (*querimonia*) and the votive epigram (*voti sententia compos*)¹⁴ to which later on the appeal to arms is added. This would seem to exclude amatory elegy as a proper genre: in any event elegiacs are described as *exigui*, an epithet which, like *mollis*, seems to indicate rather clearly the lowly place of elegy in the hierarchy of genres.¹⁵

Altogether the treatment of elegy — and especially of amatory elegy — seems to show a certain nuance of disdain. That this is due to Horace's classicism or more strictly to his adherence to a rigidly hierarchical doctrine of the genres (with epic at the top and elegy near the bottom) seems at least very probable. Upon this point recent critical and interpretative work on the fifth book of Philodemus' *Περὶ ποιημάτων* has shed a good deal of light.¹⁶ We

¹⁴ There is some doubt as to just what *voti sententia compos* means. Orelli in his edition (*Q. Horatius etc. editio quarta*, II [Berlin 1892] 583) thinks that the phrase refers to amatory elegy (*ἔρωτικῇ*) although he somewhat inconsistently accepts with Ribbeck, Michaelis and Kiessling the opinion of the grammarian Sacerdos (*GLK* 6.510) that *voti sententia compos* refers to *epigrammata consecrationum*. E. C. Wickham (*The Works of Horace*, II [Oxford, 1891] 396), however, points out, in refutation of Orelli, that "amatory poetry is not all of 'granted prayers'; and in truth love is left as a subject of lyric poetry (v. 85)." "Horace," Wickham continues, "is thinking rather of the elegiac couplet as the metre of *inscriptions*, 'exigui elegi,' whether on funeral urns or on votive offerings." This seems to me clearly the right view. How, indeed, could the loves of the elegists be described as *voti sententiae compotes*? The "sense of granted prayer," as the phrase surely must be translated, seems to apply only to votive epigram. Lyric is, to Horace, the metre of love.

¹⁵ Cf. here Higham, *op. cit.* (see note 2).

¹⁶ I am indebted here to Immisch, *op. cit.* (see note 2). In general, Hellenistic critical theory followed Alexandrine practice in a more or less "generous" interpretation of the scope of the subject matter of poetry including (cf. J. W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity* [Cambridge, 1934] 1.174) the probable (*πλάσμα*), the absurd or fabulous (*μῦθος*) and the actual or true (*ἱστορία*). Against this classification (accepted

know now that Porphyrio's identification of Horace's main source as Neoptolemus was quite correct and we know also the precise points wherein Philodemus differed from Neoptolemus — points that were unquestionably discussed at the Villa of the Pisos and were well known to Horace and the other critics of the day. The main ones that interest us here concerned (1) the relation of form (*σύνθεσις*) to subject matter and (2) the utility of poetry. It is plain that Philodemus was in favor of giving much freer play to the imagination than Neoptolemus would grant, that he doubted the effectiveness of separating form and content, as Neoptolemus did both specifically and in his very subdivision of poetry into the threefold *ποίησις*, *ποίημα*, *ποιητής*, and that finally he did not follow Neoptolemus in thinking utility or edification a necessary attribute of poetry. In all these respects Horace follows Neoptolemus, not Philodemus. The reason for this would seem to proceed quite logically from our whole argument. Horace is clinging to his hierarchical conception of rigid genres that are unalterably fixed in a given form, meter and subject matter. He is also quite as inevitably prepared to defend the moral utility of poetry: Neoptolemus' doctrine of *τέρπειν ὠφελεῖν* became the famous *utile dulci* and well served to express that function of poetry most acceptable to Augustus and Maecenas. From this point of view, the exclusion of amatory elegy is easily accounted for. It was *not* a respectable genre in the rigidly classicist sense; it was, furthermore, not susceptible of edification. This does not mean that Horace was "shocked" by its content in any Victorian sense. What he objected to was its claim to literary importance as a *genre* and its consequent diversion of literary energy from more exalted and patriotic genres and themes. Love was appropriate in its place — along with wine and the *décor* of the classical lyric — but it was reprehensible *nequitia*, as compared with the serious business of life or letters.

All this fits very neatly with the evidence derived from the satires. The decisive question, however, is whether Horace really

by Philodemus) Neoptolemus rebelled and was followed in his rebellion by Horace. Neoptolemus insisted on truth (*ἀλήθεια*) and was perhaps more literal in this respect than Horace. This whole question is especially well treated by Higham, *op. cit.* 111, and by Immisch, *op. cit.*, *passim*. The point is that Horace included some *ficta* (i.e. that which was *proxima veris*: *Ars* 338–40) but probably rejected all that was not validated by the use of some "classic" such as Homer, Sophocles etc. Cf. also in this connection: W. Kroll, *Studien zum Verständnis der römischen Literatur* (Stuttgart, 1924) 143–145.

applied such an apparently abstract doctrine to Tibullus and Propertius. Did he recognize in them the kind of literary opposition he sensed in their master, Cornelius Gallus?

The answer is, I think, doubtful only if we fail to rid our minds of a very common preconception. This preconception is due, I think, to an idealization of Horace that is not warranted by any evidence. I mean by this the notion that Horace was too amiable, tolerant and independent — too wise and witty perhaps — to be really “hostile” to such poets as Tibullus and Propertius. This view ignores, I believe, the close dependence of Horace on Augustus and Maecenas as well as the extent to which literature was really regimented in the Augustan age. The elegists — both in fact and theory — were unsympathetic to the Augustan and Horatian program: they offended both its literary and its moral ideals, which were more or less inseparable.¹⁷ This does not mean that the elegists were handled as political enemies: the more extreme of the old neoterics were, but only for obvious derelictions. As a matter of fact, elegists like Propertius and Tibullus had little difficulty in finding patrons: in the case of Messala this meant protection and freedom, since Messala was a courageous man who approved of amatory elegy;¹⁸ in the case of Maecenas, however, it meant a steady and doubtless irresistible pressure to write, if not epic, at least a kind of patriotic and epical elegy.¹⁹

What the nature of this “pressure” was we can see in Horace’s incidental references to Valgius, Tibullus and Propertius. Horace’s poem to Valgius (*C.* 2.9) is simple enough. We must remember that Valgius was a very well known writer who had shown remarkable promise in epic and who is mentioned in the “favorable” list in the tenth satire of Book 1.²⁰ Nevertheless the deprecation evident in

¹⁷ See note 10 above.

¹⁸ Messala was the patron of elegy *par excellence*. His personal record, furthermore, is one of marked independence, as his resignation of the city prefecture indicates. It seems most probable to assume that his association with the *collegium poetarum* (i.e. Gallus and the rest) led to some speculation as to his true feelings toward Cato and Bibaculus and that he, to protect his political reputation, made the public disavowal referred to in note 6.

¹⁹ This is too complex a subject to be treated here. The best summary of the development of Propertius — as increasing pressure was put on him to “conform” — can be found in Butler and Barber, *Propertius* (Oxford, 1933), lxii-lxvi. Butler and Barber, however, present the facts merely; they do not draw the conclusions.

²⁰ *Serm.* 1.10.82-3. He is mentioned immediately after Maecenas and Virgil. Apparently he was mainly known at this time (35) as an elegiac poet though he had

Horace's reference to his elegies for the lost Mystes is clear. He refers to them as "soft" (*molles*) complaints and urges Valgius to turn instead to the new campaigns of Augustus.

Somewhat more disputable are Horace's references to Albius Tibullus. The first (*C.* 1.33) is a piece of light and witty advice to Tibullus on his love, Glycera:²¹ "Do not be discouraged," says Horace, "do not grieve too much about your 'Honey' and don't go on singing your piteous (*miserabiles*) elegies because some younger rival has got ahead of you. That is the way of the world. It is the same with me. I had a chance for a real (*melior*) love but got the *libertina* Myrtale." The tone here is urbane — thoroughly Horatian — but the subtle mockery is nevertheless unmistakable. The elegies which Tibullus tediously reiterates (*decantes*) are *miserabiles* (with a connotation probably somewhat broader than 'piteous'). To the "man of the world" all these loves are a fickle and somewhat foolish business — as the comparison of Tibullus' mistress with Horace's casual *libertina* implies; the basic antipathy to elegy is here only lightly (though clearly) hinted at, for the primary mood of the poem is quite different from that of the ode to Valgius.

It is in the epistle to Tibullus (1.4), however, that Horace really speaks his mind. This epistle is also a piece of advice to Tibullus.

doubtless already given signs of that epic promise referred to by the Panegyrist of Messala (cf. Tibullus, 4.1.177–80) where he is rather extravagantly ranked next to Homer. In all probability, Valgius did write epic or at least some hexameters in epic style, although the extant lines seem more appropriate to bucolic. Perhaps he was something of a literary factotum for he also wrote treatises on grammar and rhetoric. That he was a direct follower of Gallus in elegy seems very doubtful, since he is not mentioned by Ovid as being in the regular line of elegists. His reference to Codrus and Cinna in the one important fragment of his elegies we possess would tend to establish his close relationship to the *neoterici*. Since Horace in the ninth ode of his first book refers to his elegies as *molles querelae* for a lost Mystes, we may perhaps infer that they were a somewhat miscellaneous collection of epigrams and elegies proper (like those of Catullus, Calvus and Cinna rather than those of Gallus) principally relating to a beloved boy, Mystes, and mostly elegiac in character as well as metre. Cf. Schanz-Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* (München, 1935) 2.172–174. Cf. also note 8 above.

²¹ There has been some dispute as to whether the Albius of this poem is really Tibullus. Ullman's attempt to establish the identity (B. L. Ullman, "Horace and Tibullus," *AJPh* 33 [1912] 149–167) was countered by J. P. Postgate ("Albius and Tibullus," *AJPh* 33 [1912] 450–455), to which Ullman replied (*AJPh* 33 [1912] 456–460). The main difficulty is the identity of Glycera. Can she or can she not be identified with Nemesis? Or did Tibullus have some third love called Glycera? The answer, I think, is that *immitis Glycerae* (with its obvious suggestion of its Greek equivalents *πικρον γλυκύ*) is a humorous epithet. Glycera, in fact, may have been a generalized term, something equivalent to our "sweet" or "honey."

Horace asks him what he is doing in the country — whether he is writing poems to rival the *opuscula* of Cassius of Parma or strolling through the woods and reflecting on all that befits a wise and good man. Then Horace warns Tibullus that he is not just a body without a soul: the gods have given him all the gifts — beauty, means, health and reputation; let him therefore use these gifts and control his passions so the last unexpected day will not find him unready. And then, with a touch of humor, Horace describes himself — the sage and philosophic adviser who is after all only a sleek and well-manicured pig from Epicurus' sty, for Tibullus to laugh at if he will.

Now all this is clear enough save for the reference to Cassius of Parma. This Cassius — even if we do not with Ullman²² equate him with the Cassius Etruscus of the early *sermones* — was not only a literary figure, but one of the conspirators who killed Caesar, and a dangerous enemy of Augustus. After Philippi, Cassius joined the side of Antony and, as Suetonius relates, attacked Augustus in *epistulae* of a most scandalous sort;²³ the result was that Augustus directed the general Quintius Attius Varus to put Cassius out of the way. The reference to him here, then, can hardly fail to embarrass those critics who think the whole poem (as well as the comparison of Tibullus and Cassius) complimentary to Tibullus. It is largely on account of this difficulty, in fact, that Postgate denied the identity of Albius and Tibullus. If, however, we take the reference to Cassius at its face value and make no attempt to interpret Horace as being complimentary to Tibullus here, the poem becomes perfectly comprehensible, as Immisch has ably shown.²⁴

While the humorous touch of self depreciation at the close of the epistle shows that Horace is not fundamentally hostile to Tibullus, the reference to Tibullus' work *quod Cassi Parmensis opuscula vincat* is clearly uncomplimentary. Not only the comparison with a literary nonentity's *opuscula* (a depreciatory word) but the identification of that literary nonentity with the notorious enemy of Augustus makes the meaning unmistakable. Probably Immisch is correct in interpreting this mention of Cassius as a hit at the well known toler-

²² See Ullman, *AJPh* 33 (1912) 164-167.

²³ See Suet. *Aug.* 4. The extant references to Cassius are collected in Teuffel and Schwabe, *History of Roman Literature* 1.210.7.

²⁴ See Immisch, *op. cit.* (see note 2) 141, and Postgate, *op. cit.* (see note 21) 453 but especially *Selections from Tibullus and others* (London, 1903) 181.

ance of Messala (as well as of Pollio) and his circle for the political opponents of the Augustan regime. But elegy, at any rate, was suspect, not only because it had originated in the anti-Caesarean camp of the *neoterici* but because its vogue in the Augustan age was, as we have seen, a tacit rejection of literary Augustanism. To Horace, therefore, Tibullus' elegy was a blot on the scutcheon of a friend who might otherwise have been relatively congenial. The epistle is thus in the nature of an unmistakable but friendly reproof: "Are you," Horace asks Tibullus in effect, "going to continue to write these reactionary poems or are you going to wake up to your own great advantages and learn the wisdom that comes from philosophy and meditation?" That in brief is the essence of Horace's advice. Were the epistle, as Ullman supposes, only a word of admonition to the preoccupied lover, there surely would have been no necessity for the reference to Cassius. But there is no mention of love — not even the mocking mention of the ode (1.33); it is the writing itself to which Horace is clearly referring. In the light of his general attitude toward elegy, this depreciatory reference to the specific elegies of Tibullus would thus seem plain enough.

Horace never refers to Propertius by name, but most commentators believe he has Propertius in mind in a celebrated passage in the epistle to Florus (*Epist.* 2.2.90). The reasons for identifying Propertius with the unknown member of the mutual-admiration society mentioned in these lines have been almost definitively stated by Postgate and are difficult to refute: the poem does refer to a definite individual; Propertius did boast of himself as a Roman Callimachus; also, Horace's lines contain phrases which can hardly be reminiscent of anybody but Propertius. Finally, as Butler and Barber suggest, Propertius did plagiarize Horace in several places.²⁵

The hostility here is what we should expect: Horace's attitude toward Propertius' elegy is much the same as his attitude toward the elegy of Tibullus and of Valgius. The setting of the epistle gives it a special piquancy. Horace is explaining to Florus why he has stopped writing lyrics. Among other reasons he cites the unfavorable conditions in Rome: not only the noise of the city but the nature of literary success there is against him. He cannot at his age compete with the cliques and mutual-admiration societies

²⁵ On this question, see especially J. P. Postgate, *Propertius Select Elegies* (London, 1881) xxxii-xxxiv, and Butler and Barber, *Propertius* (Oxford, 1933) xxiv.

that make literary reputations. Then follow the lines we have mentioned, which are just one illustration of what goes on in these cliques; that this illustration concerns an elegist and most probably Propertius is only another instance of Ovid's old grudge against the *neoterici* and their elegiac successors from Gallus on. Horace well knew what cliques annoyed him the most. All this is comprehensible enough.

There is, however, a touch of asperity in the final lines of this passage (99-100) which needs further discussion. As a result of the mock duel of compliments, — says Horace —

Discedo Alcaeus puncto illius: ille meo quis?
Quis nisi Callimachus? si plus adposcere visus
Fit Mimnermus et optivo cognomine crescit.

The reference to Horace as an Alcaeus is of course directly in line with the new program: Horace was the Roman *εὐπετής* of Alcaic lyric. But Propertius in Horace's opinion is a Callimachus. Horace is of course aware that this was Propertius' opinion also, but in Horace's mouth this opinion takes on a different nuance. It is as if a modern follower of T. S. Eliot were to re-echo ironically a less sophisticated person's acclaim of Robert Bridges as another Tennyson. "He calls me an Alcaeus," says Horace, "What then did I call him? What but Callimachus!" Horace even goes one step further and adds that he should not have boggled at calling him a Mimnermus. In other words Horace might really have repaid Propertius' compliment in the proper (i.e. for Horace) terms, for Mimnermus as the *εὐπετής* of amatory elegy was the real equivalent of Alcaeus, the *εὐπετής* of Alcaic lyric. The difference was after all inconsiderable; elegy was too slight a genre to make much ado about, even granting the undoubted superiority of Mimnermus to Callimachus.

This concludes the known references of Horace to elegists. Let us sum up our argument. Horace in the *Sermones* (1.10) reveals a distinct hostility toward the *neoterici* of the years immediately after Philippi. This hostility included not only the deceased representatives of the school (Calvus, Catullus) and its older living exemplars (Valerius Cato and Furius Bibaculus) but also its younger members, among whom we may reckon not only the obscure *poetae-grammatici* Hermogenes, Fannius and Pantilius but also and more significantly Gallus, whose omission from the poem can only be deliberate. Horace's quarrel in the satire is with the neoteric defense of invective

and the use of grecisms. But the evidence of all his critical work shows that this was only one, not his principal objection to neotericism; much more important was his opposition to the Alexandrinism and anti-Augustanism of the school. He perceived correctly that amatory elegy was the residuary legatee of neotericism; he saw in elegy — as developed by Gallus and perfected by Tibullus and Propertius — not only a literary tradition running counter to his new program for the Romanization of the older and greater Greek genres but also a concealed opposition to Augustus that in a new and subtle fashion was taking the place of the old neoteric invective. Elegy was written primarily for the gay set of the Capitol — a set that by inheritance and inclination could care little for Augustus' moral, religious and literary revival. This, then, was the reason why Horace ignored amatory elegy in the *Ars Poetica*, deprecated Valgius' Mystes poems, rebuked Tibullus, and disparaged Propertius.