
Harvard University Werner Jaeger Cambridge, Mass.

HORACE SERM. II VII 75-83

tune mihi dominus, rerum imperiis hominumque tot tantisque minor, quem ter undicta quaterque imposita haud umquam misera formidine priuet?

adde super, dictis quod non leuis ualeat: nam siue uicarius est qui servo paret, uti mos uester ait, seu conseruus, tibi quid sum ego? nempe tu mihi qui imperitas alius servis miser atque duceris ut neruis alienis mobile lignum.

quisnam igitur liber? sapiens, sibi qui imperious.

So far as I am aware, the first scholar to draw attention to a difficulty inherent in the traditional text of this passage was Mr Alan Ker of Trinity College Cambridge 1). It will conduce no less to the logical dissection of the text than to the presentation of my diagnostic and reconstructive argument if I describe that difficulty in his terms, which he kindly allows me to quote, as follows. For convenience of reference I attach a letter to each sentence.


1) In a paper read to the Cambridge Philological Society on 20 Jan. 1955; but Mr Ker informs me that he withdrew this item, and it will therefore not appear in the printed Proceedings.
“(a) Davus asks his master ‘Are you, Horace, my master? — you, who are really so inferior?’ He goes on: (b) ‘Add moreover that which means no less than what I have just said.’ (c) We therefore expect some reinforcement of the first statement (75—7), and indeed we get it (in 80—82). ‘You who give orders to me are really the wretched slave of another’ (i.e. his passions), a mere puppet. (d) In the intervening passage, however, Davus asks a question which seems irrelevant, viz. ‘What is my relation to you?’ Davus’s relation to Horace is not in point; throughout this whole passage he is talking about his master’s slavery. (e) And even if it were in point, it is strange that the question is not answered.’

Remarking that in 80 editors read quid, Ker pointed out that the variant quod was well (indeed, better) attested, and would, at least, get rid of the “irrelevant” question.

But neither is quod satisfactory; for “conservus (tibi quod sum ego)” cancels not only question but apodosis, so that “nempe... lignum” becomes the apodosis; in the result, the conclusion (tu... alii (-is) servi) is anticipated by the dogmatic statement now so surprisingly embodied in the second of the two alternative protases. It is certainly not Horace who can argue (or express himself) like that; and I remain convinced that all the editors are right in taking “tibi quid sum ego?” (I italicise the emphatic words) as the apodosis to that siue... seu; nothing could be more lucid in itself, and surely one feature which further confirms quid is that after “tune mihi dominus?” this is naturally the balancing question. A further confirmation I find in nempe; see below, antepenultimate paragraph.

Two other features, however, are not as they should be.

I — Wickham defends the “redundant” nam by that regular use of γάρ which is now appropriately labelled by Den-

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2) Reading the variant alii.
3) There is no real force in that, as an argument; e.g. just below, at 83, the reading (qui), similarly attested by inferior manuscripts against the best, is admittedly and undoubtedly the true reading.
4) Strictly speaking, objection can not be taken to the resulting relation between nam and nempe; the dictionaries will give examples both of nempe enim, and of nempe introducing a conclusion after a conditional protasis. Nevertheless the fact that nam has to carry its force across siue and seu and quid, and then be reinforced by nempe, before it leads to any such positive sense (alii servi) as can justify adde... ualeat, is curiously awkward and confusing.
niston "appositional" and illustrated by him in *Greek Particles* pp. 67–8. But Latin is not Greek, and no parallel is cited either from Horace or any other Latin author. A still more significant objection is that our *nam* introduces a question; and that, I venture to suggest, could not be paralleled for *appositional* γαρ even from Greek.

II — I now come to what is in my opinion the fundamental flaw of this whole passage. The words *adde super*... *ualeat* clearly mean that what follows is regarded by the speaker as a new point, and one no less true (or important). Indeed *non leuius ualeat* will normally suggest "is if anything of more validity"; and as to that, see below (n. 9). But here the sense "you are not master in relation to me, but a slave yourself" is followed, not by anything new, but merely by a restatement of the same idea in varied terms 5). Ker, with his eye on a particular issue in 80, had — naturally — for lucidity's sake toned down (see a b c d above) the awkwardness in this far from logical sequence 6):

80—2 *nempe... lignum* is 7), after all, the answer to *tibi quid sum ego?* But it is equally, and more obviously, the answer to 75—7 *tune mihi dominus?* In conformity with this and all the above considerations I would restore the passage as follows.

78 *adde super, dictis quod non leuius ualeat: nam*
75 *tune mihi dominus, rerum imperiis hominumque*
77 *tot tantisque minor, quem ter vindicta quaterque*
79 *imposita haud umquam misera formidine priuet?*

I have placed 78 between 53—74 and 75—83. *nam* is now no longer a unique instance of an "appositional" use, but

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5) "*adde super* suggests the same question from another point of view" — Gow (and cf. Ker's c). But it ought not to; particularly when followed by *dictis quod non leuius ualeat*.
6) e.g. in (a) he ignores *imperiis*; which is, however, one cog in the logical machinery; cf. 81, 83.
7) Formally, it may well not seem so; hence Ker's(e); but logically it does include that answer, and its form is due to the very fact that it is required to revert to 75—7 and specifically answer that (the leading) question.
recognisable as one more example of that well-authenticated idiom by which this particle introduces — and at once 8), and without nempe or other such reinforcement — a question implying surprise or even sometimes indignation. “Ante-classical and poetical” say Lewis and Short. No, for it will be found in Cicero de Or. I 22, 101. The proper description would be “colloquial”, since it is confined to dialogue; and so here. We may often render “Why, ...” cf. Wilkins on Cic. l. c. supr., Nixon at Plaut. l. c. infr. Sometimes it does stand to the preceding in the relation of “for”; e. g. Verg. Aen. II 373, Hor. epist. I 1, 76. But often not, because it begins a speech; e. g. Plaut. Poen. 1122, Cic. l. c., Verg. geo. 4, 445. Here, evidently, it belongs to the former type.

53—71 develops the idea “you, H., are virtually a slave” (56, 70). (72—4 is just a sort of footnote to that.) Then 78—5—6—7—9—80—1—2 says “I will even go further; 9) for what about your relation to me? Are you, with all your weaknesses and fears, in any real sense my ‘master’? And what, in fact, am I to you? (Not, really, servus but) ‘substitute’? or fellow-slave? 10) The answer (nempe, cf. below) to all this” (but mainly to 75 tune mihi dominus) “is: You, who command me, are yourself the slave of others. 11) Who then, if anyone, is free? The man who can command himself”.

nempe introducing a speaker’s answer to his own question is, of course, quite idiomatic; for H., cf. epod. 12, 22, and in this satire, again below, 107; at epist. I 10, 22 it will mean “sure enough ...”; ibid. 16, 31 “Yes, I feel pleasure, of course” (Wickham, H. for English Readers) is the reply by the person addressed.

8) Contrast what has been remarked in n. 4.

9) Observe, he does go further; “non leuius” is the usual underatement. 53—71 you are a slave; 75—7 no, a slave once legally manumitted is free, but no series of manumissions would liberate you!

10) The point of these alternative terms is this: “uicarius is perhaps the word for me, since if you are a slave, I am a slave’s slave; yet conservus also would suit, since in one respect we are slaves of the same master”.

11) The variants are alii, aliis (“other people”). On the whole, I prefer the latter, because 75 (rerum imperii hominumque) has already superseded the single proclivity; and cf. (with Peerlkamp) Vell. Pat. II 73 libertorum suorum libertus, seruorum servus.
The first step in dislocation is accidental omission; and the reason for the original omission of 78 was presumably that it is not syntactically indispensable; cf. e.g. epist. II 1.101, which is certainly out of place.

To return to Mr Ker: I have to thank him for reading, and at one point ridding of a dubious argument, the first draft of this note. And he now authorises me to state that in his opinion my transposition solves his problem.

Cambridge
A. Y. Campbell  

ZWEI THRAKISCHE BEITRÄGE
1. μυσός und μανδάχης


2) Ein ähnlicher Fall könnte im μανίζει der Formel auf einem phrygischen Denkmal stecken: εἰ δὲ τῆς τῆς στήλης καθελετ ἡ μανίζει, wohl für (ἀ)φανίζετ. Eine andere, mir ungläubhafte Hypothese s. bei Haas, Jahrb. für kleinasiatische Forschung III/1, 1956, S. 130.