TWO ACROSTICS IN HORACE'S *SATIRES* (1.9.24-8, 2.1.7-10)

Hunters of acrostics have had little luck with Horace. Despite his manifest love of complex wordplay, virtuoso metrical tricks and even alphabet games,[1] acrostics seem largely absent from Horace's poetry. The few that have been sniffed out in recent years are either fractured and incomplete – the postulated *PINN-* in *Carm.* 4.2.1-4 (*pinnis*? *Pindarus*?)[2] – or disappointingly low-stakes;[3] suggestions of acrostics are confined to the *Odes* alone. Besides

[1] On Horace's alphabet games: E. Gowers, 'The Ends of the Beginning', in L.B.T. Houghton and M. Wyke (edd.), *Perceptions of Horace: A Roman Poet and His Readers* (Cambridge, 2009), 39-60, at 44-6; ead., *Horace: Satires Book 1* (Cambridge, 2012) on *S.* 1.1.25-6, 4.56-62.

[2] R.F. Thomas, *Horace: Odes Book 4 and Carmen Saeculare* (Cambridge, 2011) ad loc., citing John Henderson *per litteras*.

[3] The best acrostic found in Horace so far is imperative *DISCE* at *Carm.* 1.18.11-15 (G. Morgan, '*Nullum, Vare…* Chance or Choice in *Odes* 1.18?', *Philologus* 137 [1993], 142-5), picking up and modifying **disce**rnunt (1.18.11) as a gamma-acrostic, and adding suitably didactic authority to Horace's revelations and reconcealments of Bacchic mysteries. (Does **candide** *Bassareu* at 1.18.11 mimic Homer's unintentional ΛΕΥΚΗ at *Il.* 24.1-4, via Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ, *Ph.* 783-7?) Less persuasively, N. Adkin, '*Quis est nam ludus in undis*? (Virgil, *Eclogue* 9 39-43)', *Acta Classica* 51 (2015), 43-58, at 49 n. 39, sees *SAPIS* at *Carm.* 2.10.9-13, reinforcing *sapienter* (2.10.22) but otherwise with little connection to the poem's contents.

diverging from the long-standing Roman obsession with literary acrostics,[4] Horace's apparent lack of interest is especially surprising given that Virgil, his contemporary, friend and 'poetic pace-maker',[5] was at the time conducting what seems to be a systematic adaptation of Hellenistic acrostic-poetics into Latin poetry.[6]

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[4] Some pre-Horatian examples: Cicero cites Ennius' *Q. ENNIUS FECIT* (not attested in surviving fragments) and the acrostics in the Sibylline Books, highlighting problems of intentionality (*De diu.* 2.111-12); Varro apparently commented on Sibylline acrostics to much the same effect (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.62.6). L.J. Kronenberg, 'The Light Side of the Moon: A Lucretian Acrostic (*LUCE*, 5.712-15) and Its Relationship to Acrostics in Homer (*LEUKĒ*, *Il.* 24.1–5) and Aratus (*LEPTĒ*, *Phaen.* 783-87),' *CPh* (forthcoming), finds an acrostic in Lucretius to match his interest in letterplay. On Latin acrostics generally: G. Damschen, 'Das lateinische Akrostichon: Neue Funde bei Ovid sowie Vergil, Grattius, Manilius und Silius Italicus', *Philologus* 14 (2004), 88-115; on Greek: C. Luz, *Technopaignia: Formspiele in der griechischen Dichtung* (Leiden, 2010). A strong case for systematic, allusive acrostic-poetics in Augustan poetry has been made by M. Robinson in two recent articles, 'Arms and a Mouse: Approaching Acrostics in Ovid and Vergil', *MD* forthcoming, and 'Looking Edgeways: Pursuing Acrostics in Ovid and Vergil', *CQ* forthcoming.

[5] Gowers (n. 1 [2012]), 61.

[6] The search for Virgilian acrostics continues unabated. I am particularly fond of *MARS* at *Aen.* 7.601-4, hesitantly proffered by D.P. Fowler, 'An Acrostic in Vergil (*Aeneid* 7.601-4)?', *CQ* 33 (1983), 298, and now almost universally accepted. Also persuasively, A. Grishin, '*Ludus in undis*: An Acrostic in *Eclogue* 9', *HSCPh* 104 (2008), 237-40, finds *VNDIS* at *Ecl.* 9.34-8; J.J. Clauss, 'An Acrostic in Vergil (*Eclogues* 1.5-8): The Chance That Mimics Choice', *Aevum Antiquum* 10 (1997), 267-87, argues for *FONS* at *Ecl.* 1.5-8; and E.L. Brown, *Numeri*

This paper offers a new perspective. I identify two acrostics in Horace's *Satires* which I believe to be deliberate, highly allusive and deeply intertwined with the subject matter of the passages and poems in which they are found.[7] These acrostics both appear at moments where

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Virgiliani: Studies in Eclogues and Georgics [Brussels, 1963], 96-114, first located the controversial signature *Ma-Ve-Pu* at *G.* 1.429-33 – on which see now M. Haslam, 'Hidden Signs: Aratus *Diosemeiai* 46ff., Vergil *Georgics* 1.424ff.', *HSCPh* 94 (1992), 199-204; D. Feeney and D. Nelis, 'Two Virgilian Acrostics: *certissima signa*?', *CQ* 55 (2005), 644-6; and T. Somerville, 'Note on a Reversed Acrostic in Vergil *Georgics* 1.429-33', *CPh* 105 (2010), 202-9. The most level-headed account to date of Virgilian acrostic scholarship is given by J.T. Katz, 'The Muse at Play: An Introduction', in J. Kwapisz, D. Petrain and M. Szymański (edd.), *The Muse at Play: Riddles and Wordplay in Greek and Latin poetry* (Berlin, 2013), 1-30, at 4-10, and updated in id., 'Another Vergilian Signature in the *Georgics*?', in P. Mitsis and I. Ziogas (edd.), *Wordplay and Powerplay in Latin Poetry* (Berlin, 2016), 69-85, at 72 n. 9.

[7] Both these acrostics are listed in the scrap-heap of 'accidental acrostics' piled up by I. Hilberg, 'Ist die *Ilias Latina* von einem Italicus verfasst oder einem Italicus gewidmet?', *WS* 21 (1899), 264-305, at 286 and 295, but neither has yet been rehabilitated in modern scholarship. Hilberg identifies other acrostics in the *Satires*, most of which do seem truly unintentional. I suspect, however, that it is no accident that acrostic *ADDI* in the last four lines of *Satires* 1 (1.10.89-92) not only echoes the wickedly ironic 'false closure' of 1.1.121 (*uerbum non amplius* **addam**; cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]), 46), but coincides with Horace's instructions to the *puer* to make a last-minute addition to the collection (*i, puer, atque meo citus **haec subscribe** libello*, 92); cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) ad loc.. *MUS* at 2.1.54-6 paradoxically encompasses large-scale *lupus* and *bos* (55) and anticipates the *mures* of 2.6.79-117 – cf. Robinson (n. 4 [*MD*]), on *MUS* at Ov. *Met.* 1.14-16 – and both *HIC* (1.5.30-2) and *NIL* (2.5.69-71) are neat gamma-acrostics –

Horace's poetics, politics and career progression are under negotiation; they add an additional layer of complexity to Horace's characteristically slippery self-definition in the *Satires*, and tap into a rich source of intertextual dialogue with both real and imaginary poetic contemporaries.

THE WRONG SORT OF *DOCTUS AMICUS*: *S.* 1.9.24-8

Horace, sauntering through Rome, is accosted by a distant acquaintance[8] desperate to worm his way into Horace's circle of friends and patrons. An excruciating comedy of manners ensues: the pest besieges Horace with increasingly pathetic attempts to prove his personal and poetic worth, to assert common ground between the two of them, and to persuade Horace to

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but proving three-letter acrostics is a mug's game: cf. M. Hendry, 'A Martial Acronym in Ennius', *LCM* 19 (1994), 7-8, at 7.

[8] *quidam notus mihi nomine tantum* (3), an evasive identifier that E. Gowers, 'Fragments of Autobiography in Horace, *Satires* 1', *Cl.Ant.* 22.1 (2003), 55-91, at 59, calls 'the best joke of *Satires* 1'. Is the pest an anonymous acquaintance, or a wholly imaginary character? E. Oliensis, *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority* (Cambridge, 1998), 36 takes him for Horace's 'distorted double'; J. Henderson, 'Be alert (your country needs lerts): Horace, *Satires* 1.9', *PCPhS* 39 (1993), 67-93, at 70, sees him as a version of his younger, more socially clumsy self, recalled from 1.3.63-6 (cf. Gowers [n. 8], 86 and 61-7, reading *quo tendis? unde uenis*? [1.9.62] as a biographical query). J.L. Ferriss-Hill, 'A Stroll with Lucilius: Horace, *Satires* 1.9 Reconsidered', *AJPh* 132 (2011), 429-55, argues that the pest is Horace's satiric forefather Lucilius, and various other scholars maintain that he is one of Horace's poetic peers (listed by Ferriss-Hill at 429 n. 3); none of these concrete identifications seems persuasive to me.

take him for an ally and introduce him to Maecenas. The hapless Horace, meanwhile, constrained by his own politeness, does all he can to reject the pest's overtures of *amicitia* – to no effect, until he is saved by the *deus ex machina* of an impending lawsuit (and/or Apollo: *sic me seruauit Apollo*, 1.9.78).

Patronage in *Satires* 1 rests on a delicate web of interpersonal connections: who you know, how (and how well) you know them, and who *they* might know in turn. Rather than introduce yourself to a prospective peer or patron, you must hope that well-connected friends will vouch for your good character and arrange an introduction; if your taste, morals, references and resumé suit, you might succeed (1.6.52-64).[9] The joke of *S.* 1.9 is that the tactless pest is hyper-aware of these social nuances and necessities, yet utterly inept at putting them into practice. Trying, with misplaced confidence, to insinuate himself into the centre of Horace's social circle, he addresses Horace with the over-familiar *dulcissime rerum* (4), and presumptuously asserts *noris nos… docti sumus* (7). Horace's reply is politely noncommittal (*pluris | hoc mihi eris*, 7-8) but the narratorial voice tells a different story (*notus mihi nomine tantum*, 3); he will later try to shake off the pest by drawing rude attention to his exclusion from Maecenas' in-crowd (*quendam… non tibi notum*, 17; *non… quo tu rere, modo*, 48-9).

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[9] Hierarchical 'patronage' is subsumed under a veneer of 'friendship'. Cf. D. Konstan, 'Patrons and Friends', *CPh* 90 (1995), 328-42 and P. L. Bowditch, *Horace and the Gift Economy of Patronage* (Berkeley, 2001), 19-26 on the language of *amicitia* denoting personal, affectionate friendship as well as more formal patronage structures. D. Armstrong, 'Utility and Affection in Epicurean Friendship: Philodemus *On the Gods* 3, *On Property Management*, and Horace *Sermones* 2.6', in R.R. Caston and R.A. Kaster, *Hope, Joy, and Affection in the Classical World* (Oxford, 2016), 182-208, at 202-8, explores the Epicureanism of Horatian *amicitia* in the *Satires*.

The third bout of conversation between these ill-matched interlocutors sees the pest redouble his efforts to inveigle himself into Horace's circle of friends, patrons and clients:

> '*si bene me noui*, non Viscum *pluris* **amicum**,
>
> non Varium facies: nam quis me scribere plures
>
> **A**ut citius possit uersus? quis *membra mouere*
>
> **M**ollius? inuideat quod et Hermogenes ego canto.'
>
> **I**nterpellandi locus hic erat: 'est tibi mater,
>
> **C**ognati, quis te saluo est opus? 'haud mihi quisquam:
>
> **O**mnes composui.' 'felices! nunc ego resto.
>
> *confice.*'   (*S.* 1.9.22-9)

Here the precise term for the status sought by the pest reappears as an acrostic: the first letters of lines 24-8 spell out *AMICO*, repeating the word from its place two lines earlier (*amicum*, 22). The close proximity of the acrostic to the same word in the text should be enough to qualify it as noteworthy;[10] that it is a keyword of crucial importance for the poem (for what is *S.* 1.9, if not a discourse *de amicitia*?) puts its significance almost beyond doubt.

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[10] It is impossible to prove beyond doubt that an acrostic is deliberate. Commonly accepted factors include the length of the acrostic (usually four letters or more, following Hilberg [n. 7], 266), its relevance to the poetic context, and the presence of self-conscious instructions for the reader to 'discover' the acrostic. S.M. Trzaskoma, 'Further Possibilities Regarding the Acrostic at Aratus 783-7', *CQ* 66 (2016), 785-90, at 786 notes 'mild irony inasmuch as we are using the solution to elucidate the clues rather than the other way round'. Cf. P. Bing, 'A Pun on Aratus'

In the light of this acrostic's presence, the theme of recognition and knowledge that runs through *S.* 1.9 assumes a more self-referential hue: the pest's declaration *si bene me noui* (22) looks suspiciously like a nod to the upcoming acrostic.[11] There are other clues to the acrostic's presence, too. The phrase *pluris amicum* (22) takes on additional meaning: there is indeed more '*amicus*' to be found in this passage. The pest's alliterative onslaught (*Viscum…. Varium… uersus*; *pluris… plures... possit*; *membra mouere mollius*; *citius… canto*, 22-5) focuses attention on initial letters throughout this passage, and *membra mouere* (24) is a good kenning for alphabet games as well as for dancing.[12] The end of the acrostic is signalled by a morbid pun. When Horace asks after his relatives, the pest replies blithely, 'I've buried them all',

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Name in Verse 2 of the *Phainomena*', *HSCPh* 93 (1990), 281-5, at 282; Clauss (n. 6), 267; Haslam (n. 6), 203 n. 12; Robinson (n. 4 [*MD*]).

[11] *notus* (3), *noris* (7), *notum* (17), and add too *ignosces* (72); cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) ad loc.. On metapoetic signals or instructions for acrostic-reading, cf. (e.g.) Feeney and Nelis (n. 6); J. Danielewicz, 'Vergil's *Certissima Signa* Reinterpreted: The Aratean *LEPTE*-Acrostic in *Georgics* 1', *Eos* 100 (2013), 287-95; Trzaskoma (n. 10), Robinson (n. 4 [*MD*]). Such signs commonly revolve around sight (e.g. σκέπτεο, Aratus *Phaen.* 778; *respicies*, Virgil *G.* 1.425); Horace instead integrates his acrostic into the *Satires*' obsession with recognition, comprehension, knowledge and notoriety, traced through the collection with *notare* as well as *noscere*: cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) on *S.* 3.24.

[12] *membrum* commonly denotes a small constituent part of a composite whole – in rhetoric and criticism, usually a clause or colon (*TLL* vol. VIII, 645, 19-30); cf. Horace's famous *disiecti membra poetae*, 1.4.62), but an extension to alphabet letters (along the lines of Lucretian *elementa*) is not unfeasible. Whether the question refers to physical or linguistic agility, the unspoken answer is, of course, Horace himself.

omnes composui (28); the verb here denotes the gathering of cremated bones and ashes to be placed in a funerary urn.[13] But in the *Satires*, of course, *componere* carries a more natural sense of literary composition (*componere uersus*, 1.4.8; *incomposito… pede currere uersus*, 1.10.1);[14] it implies, too, the completion of a task.[15] The pest's unnervingly casual answer signals on a metapoetic level that the acrostic has reached its end. And finally Horace, eager to end the pest's effusions, scores a decisive line under the acrostic in the first word of the next line: *confice*, 'wrap it up' (29).[16]

What of the change in case from *amicum* to *amico*? Taken together, the two words hint at the idiom *amicus amico*, an expression of reciprocal friendship and *quid pro quo* favours: 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours'.[17] The pest argues in this passage that Horace should be to

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[13] Cf., e.g., Catull. 68.98, Prop. 2.24.35, Tibull. 3.2.26, Ov. *Met.* 4.157. Tibullus' use, like Horace's, retains metapoetic overtones: *sic ego componi uersus in ossa uelim*, followed by his projected epitaph (cf. *littera* 27, *carmina* 28), perhaps implies not only 'to be buried, turned into bones' but 'to be composed as a line of verse' (cf., e.g., Petron. *Sat.* 127.10).

[14] Henderson (n. 8), 74 notes poetic terminology and a textual turn here: 'his abjection of *ille* into another indirect lexis is at once seized on and dismantled (*est tibi… te… est opus ~ haud mihi … composui*)'. T.S. Welch, 'Horace's Journey through Arcadia', *TAPhA* 138 (2008), 47-74, at 60-1 compares Virgil *Ecl.* 1.23: *sic paruis* **componere** *magna solebam*. Oliensis (n. 8), 219 renders *omnes composui* as 'I've versified them all'.

[15] *TLL* s.v. II.A.1.b.

[16] Gowers [n. 1 (2012)], ad loc., translates it as 'finish me off'; Oliensis [n. 8], 219, as 'kill me' or 'write me' – but the lack of an object in the Latin lends ambiguity to the command.

[17] *amicus amico*: Plaut. *Curc.* 332, *Mil.* 660, Ter. *Phorm.* 562, Accius *Deiphobus* fr. 4 Ribbeck, Petron. *Sat.* 43 and 44. J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry: Figures of Allusion*

him as Varius was to Horace, so that one day the pest might take up Varius' role and help Horace himself; he repeats the point explicitly a few lines later (*haberes | magnum adiutorem…*, 45-6). The acrostic makes a case for the reciprocity fundamental to both friendship and patronage – or perhaps, if the *non* that begins the preceding line (23) is included in the phrase, forcefully disavows it instead.[18]

Acrostics are the unmistakeable product of an erudite writing style: intricate, laborious, artful. They are unavoidably textual, demanding a visual medium for both creation and perception;[19] their presence is proof of slow and detailed poetic composition. In a genre that proclaims itself to be plain off-the-cuff chatter (*sermo merus*, 1.4.47), they are distinctly out of place. Horace goes to great lengths in *Satires* 1 to conceal his poetry's considerable learnedness and literary sophistication behind a façade of unpretentious casualness, or even ineptitude.[20] He meanders: his plots are disguised as happenchance (*forte*, 1.9.1), his phrasing as improvised speech. The sheer textuality of the *AMICO* acrostic comes up hard against satire's illusion of orality, particularly in a poem which presents itself as doubly oral, an anecdotal retelling of an

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(Oxford, 1966), 205-6 notes that this structure, illustrating 'the reciprocal sense of polyptoton', is as suited to the perversities of civil war as to friendship.

[18] Reciprocity: cf., e.g., R.P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge, 1982), i; Konstan (n. 9), 328. Henderson (n. 8), 80 offers the inverse: 'you scratch my back, I'll knife yours.'

[19] So already Cicero: *hoc **scriptoris** est, non furentis* (*De div.* 2.112).

[20] Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) *passim* on the interplay between Horace's 'rough exterior' and concealed sophistication. Cf. Henderson (n. 8), 79; E. Gowers, 'The Restless Companion: Horace, *Satires* 1 and 2', in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire* (Cambridge, 2005), 48-61, at 49.

original dialogic encounter. Spread over the two speakers' voices and the narrator's interjection (*interpellandi locus*, 26) as well, it draws attention to Horace's post-factual crafting of the encounter into a narrative.[21]

But Horace's relationship with the Hellenistic polish implied by acrostics is notoriously difficult to pin down.[22] Besides the clear traces of elaborate and careful composition throughout his poems, he explicitly promotes key Callimachean virtues, refitted for times of political and social uncertainty:[23] careful revision (1.4.11), brevity (1.4.17-18, 1.10.9), reticence and judicious silence (1.6.123, 1.9.12), pathological terror of verbosity (1.9.29-34), avoidance of the common mob in favour of elite seclusion (1.4.133-9, 1.6.60-1). He appropriates Callimachus' metapoetic tropes for his own polemics: Lucilius' 'muddy flooding' (*flueret lutulentus*, 1.4.11; cf. 1.1.54-60), for example, replays Callimachus' Euphrates (*Hymn* 2.108), and at 2.6.14 he recreates Callimachus' fat livestock and slender intellect (*Aetia* 1.23-4; cf.

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[21] Cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]), 14 on satire between oral and written; Henderson (n. 8), 78-9 on Horace as storyteller. I wonder if the acrostic's distribution over both Horace's and the pest's speech brings about a sort of coerced reciprocity, forcing the sparring pair to collaborate on its production.

[22] J.E.G. Zetzel, 'Dreaming about Quirinus: Horace's *Satires* and the Development of Augustan Poetry', in D. Feeney and T. Woodman (edd.), *Traditions and Contexts in the Poetry of Horace* (Cambridge, 2002), 38-52; R.F. Thomas, 'Horace and Hellenistic Poetry', in S. Harrison, *The Cambridge Companion to Horace* (Cambridge, 2007), 50-62; R. Tarrant, 'Horace and Roman Literary History', in S. Harrison, *The Cambridge Companion to Horace* (Cambridge, 2007), 63-76, at 66-71; Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) , 305-6.

[23] On Horace's politics of literary revision: S. Gurd, *Work in Progress: Literary Revision as Social Performance in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 2012), 77-103.

Virgil *Ecl.* 6.4-5). Horace's favourite epithet for his admired poetic peers is the Hellenistic virtue of erudition: *nil mi officit… | ditior hic aut est quia doctior* (1.9.50-1), and later *compluris alios, doctos … amicos* (1.10.87). Indeed, his sarcastic dismissal of *simius iste… doctus* in the poetic manifesto that closes *Satires* 1 (1.10.18-19) makes it clear that he objects not so much to Callimacheanism *per se* as to the stale neoteric imitation of what was, in Callimachus, genuinely innovative. His disgust is reserved for the 'unoriginal epigones' of greater poets, who ape their stylistic mannerisms but take on none of their verve or wit.[24]

The contest between pest and poet in *S.* 1.9 is waged on the battlefield of poetics as much as social graces.[25] (It is no coincidence that the deity that saves Horace at the end of *S.* 1.9 is Apollo, Callimachus' admonitory god of poetry from *Aetia* 1.24.) Throughout the poem, the pest stakes his claims to Horace's attention on his poetic abilities: he claims to be as accomplished a poet as Horace himself, equally deserving of Maecenas' patronage. But, like his other boasts,[26] his tactics here are spectacularly self-defeating. His bold self-introduction,

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[24] The phrase is from Tarrant (n. 22), 71. Cf. K. Freudenburg, *The Walking Muse: Horace on the Theory of Satire* (Princeton, 1993), 44: Horace's new poetry in the *Satires* 'must depart from cliché-Callimacheanism (i.e. by constructing Callimacheanism *as* cliché) in some real sense'.

[25] Cf. especially Henderson (n. 8), with J. Henderson, *Writing down Rome: Satire, Comedy, and Other Offences in Latin Poetry* (Oxford, 1999), 202: 'this text, besides, composes a poetic (of "anti-aesthetic" plebeian vigour adapting Callimachean angularity and litotes, not without paradox)'.

[26] As Gowers comments (n. 1 [2012] on *S.* 1.9.22-3), the pest has apparently been paying close attention to Horace – knowing that Horace has strong opinions on the quantity and speed of poetic composition, on the celebrity Hermogenes Tigellius, on showy dancing and singing –

noris nos… docti sumus (7), starts off on roughly the right track – but his actual poetry, it emerges, is the precise opposite of such Hellenistic finesse: *quis me scribere plures | aut citius possit uersus?* (23-4). The pest tries and fails to walk the fine line between Lucilian overproduction and Callimachean *doctrina*.[27] His speech later in the poem is a parody of neoteric preciousness;[28] like the despised *simius iste* of the following poem, too, the wellspring of his creativity runs dry, as he mouths others' poems (*canto*, 1.9.25; *cantare*, 1.10.19) as well as composing his own.[29] Horace, the picture of tact, never directly lays claim to *doctrina*: he does not include himself in his homages to his *docti amici* (1.9.50-1, 1.10.87, 2.4.88), and

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but has failed to spot that all these opinions are negative. At 1.4.9-21 and 1.10.9-10 Horace emphatically denounces outpourings of lengthy poetry (and note *garrulus*, 1.4.12 ~ 1.9.33, with *garriret*, 1.9.13). Hermogenes is a favourite punching-bag, Horace's despised 'artistic antitype' (Gowers [n. 1 (2012)] on *S.* 1.2.3; cf. on *S.* 1.2.1-3; 1.3.3-19, 129-30; 1.4.72; 1.10.17-19, 80, 90). The all-singing, all-dancing pest unknowingly convicts himself of suspicious effeminacy and tastelessness (cf. Gowers [n. 1 (2012)] on *S.* 1.9.24-5) and further aligns himself with the grotesque Hermogenes (cf. 1.2.1-3).

[27] Lucilius' sloppy *sermones* are the target of Horace's most stringently Callimachean criticisms (cf. 1.4.6-13, 1.10.50-71).

[28] Three consecutive lines (57-9), for example, all feature a so-called 'Catullan molossus' (on which see D.O. Ross, *Virgil's Aeneid: A Reader's Guide* [Oxford, 2007], 151-2), in all three cases a decisive future verb (*corrumpam… desistam… deducam*). Cf. Freudenburg (n. 24), 209-10: 'the "bore" is, after all, a Neoteric'.

[29] On Horace's distaste for the sterility and banality of recitation, cf. Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) on S. 1.10.17-19, 19. A. Cucchiarelli, *La satira e il poeta: Orazio tra Epodi e Sermones* (Pisa, 2001), 78 n. 76, suggests that the *simius* and the pest may even be one and the same.

doctus is outright ironic elsewhere in the *Satires* (1.5.3, 1.10.19, 52).[30] But the *AMICO* acrostic allows Horace to best his neoteric opponent at his own game: it is a real show of *doctrina* on the part of the poet, tacitly (*tacitus*, 1.9.12) enrolling him among the greats – to the exclusion of the prolix pest.

VIRGILIAN LEISURE AND IMPERIAL POETICS: *S.* 2.1.7-10

At the opening of his second book of *Satires*, Horace declares he is at an impasse: his poetry is criticised now for its excessive satirical pungency, now for its enervated and diluted feebleness (*nimis acer*, 1; *sine neruis*, 2; *mille die uersus*, 4).[31] Fighting a war on two fronts, he sees no clear path to victory (*quid faciam?*, 5). Trebatius – a jurist by profession, here playing the role of Horace's *ad hoc* poetic counsellor – offers a solution drawn from Horace's first collection: retreat into absolute silence (5-6). Horace pleads insomnia (cf. 1.5.14-15);[32]

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[30] Cf. the *doctores inepti* of *Satires* 2 (Freudenburg [n. 24], 47): Damasippus (2.3), Catius (2.4; note *docte Cati*, 2.4.88), Davus (2.7). Freudenburg (n. 24), 17 sees satire itself as a parody of learning.

[31] *mille… uersus*: cf. Lucilius (*S.* 1.4.9-10: *in hora saepe ducentos… uersus dictebat*) and the pest (1.9.23-4). *deduci* (2.1.4) perhaps adds an element of Callimachean fineness (cf. *Ecl.* 6.5 *deductum*), *pace* F. Muecke, *Horace Satires II, with an Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Warminster, 1993), ad loc..

[32] Callimachus famously praised the *Phaenomena* as 'a token of Aratus' vigil' (Ἀρήτου σύμβολον ἀγρυπνίης, *Epigr.* 27 Pf., 4) in a poem which seems to respond to Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic from *Phaen*. 783-87 (note λεπταί ῥήσιες, 3-4). Horace here aligns himself with

Trebatius recommends his idiosyncratic version of clean living: vigorous daily exercise, and wine before bed.[33] If Horace still can't keep pen from paper, Trebatius advises, he should abandon satire and instead write pure praise of Augustus:

'quid faciam, *praescribe*.' '***quiescas***.' 'ne faciam, inquis,

omnino uersus?' 'aio.' 'peream male, si non

Optimum erat; verum nequeo dormire.' 'ter uncti

Transnanto *Tiberim*, somno quibus est opus *alto*,

Inriguumque mero sub noctem corpus haben*to*.

Aut si tantus *amor* scribendi te rapit, *aude*

Caesaris inuicti res dicere, multa laborum

praemia laturus.'   (*S.* 2.1.5-12)[34]

Aratus in his wakefulness, and so points to the approaching acrostic. (I owe this point to Thomas J. Nelson.)

[33] We know from Cicero that Trebatius was a keen swimmer (*Ad fam.* 7.10), and that he enjoyed a drink or two (*Ad fam.* 7.22). Trebatius' recommendation of imperial panegyric (*S.* 2.1.10-12) is perhaps a response to the praise he apparently received from Julius Caesar for his own legal skill (*Ad fam.* 7.10: *te Caesari nostro ualde iure consultum uideri*).

[34] J.A. Simon, *Akrosticha bei den augustischen* [sic] *Dichtern: Exoterische Studien: Zweiter Teil, mit einem Anhang:akrostichische und telestichische Texte aus der Zeit von Plautus bis auf Crestien Von Troies und Wolfram Von Eschenbach* (Cologne and Leipzig, 1899), 164-5, finds elaborate nonsensical telestichs in *S.* 2.1 (reverse telestich *MEO O INSIM DA*, 2-11; telestich *SIMOIM SUMPTOS M MAEMM*, 14-31; reverse telestich *SESST MI MIME*, 76-86), but misses *OTIA*.

Acrostic *OTIA* in lines 7-10 underscores Trebatius' advice: a life of leisure (*otium*), filled with exercise, wine and deep sleep, leaves no room for the anxieties of satire-writing.[35] *otium* is a near-synonym for *quietus*: the acrostic reprises Trebatius' first brief reply, *quiescas* (5), while Trebatius' longer response in these lines gives a more expansive explanation of his reasoning (7-12). Again, Horace drops clues. He commands Trebatius to tell him what to do: *praescribe* (5), a fitting idiom for a lawyer, with the sense of an authoritative legal ruling[36] – but literally 'write first', or 'write it out in the first letters'.[37] Alliteration again leads our eyes to word-initial letters (*ter… transnanto Tiberim,* 7-8). Reading backwards from the end of the central two lines, too, we find *ot- ot-* (*alto… habento,* 8-9), stuttering out the first syllable of *OTIA*.[38]

But something even more elaborate is afoot here. Horace's *OTIA* acrostic does not exist in isolation. At the opening of his second collection of *Satires*, Horace looks across to the end of Virgil's second poetry-book, fixing his gaze on the *sphragis* to the *Georgics*:

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[35] Though contrast 1.4.138-9: *ubi quid datur **oti**, | illudo chartis…*

[36] *TLL* I.1.a.β; cf. Muecke (n. 31) ad loc.

[37] This time his command precedes the acrostic (compare *confice*, 1.9.29).

[38] The stuttering satirist is familiar from the previous book of *Satires*: *singultim pauca locutus,* 1.6.56 (cf. *Balbinum* 1.3.40, *balbutit* 1.3.48). Aaron Kachuck points out to me that in Latin capital and uncial scripts 'L' and 'I' (and 'T') are very similar, and are often confused for one another; *alto* therefore very nearly encodes *OTIA* in reverse, when read backwards from the end of line 8. This perhaps explains why it is sleep that is 'deep' here, not the Tiber (compare Virgil *G.* 4.560-1: *altum… Euphraten*, discussed below): *Tiberim… altum* would not give the same slantwise mirror-image of the vertical acrostic.

haec super aruorum cultu pecorumque canebam

et super arboribus, *Caesar* dum magnus ad *altum*

fulminat *Euphraten* bello *uictorque* uolentis

per populos dat iura uiamque adfectat Olymp**O**.

illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis aleba**T**

Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis ot**I**,

carmina qui lusi pastorum *audax*que iuuent**A**,

Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.   (*G.* 4.559-66)

Virgil illustrates his youthful *otium* with a telestich: the final letters of lines 562-5 spell out *OTIA*.[39] At the end of line 554, *oti* forms a (partial) gamma-telestich; *lusi* in the next line alerts the reader to the wordplay (*ludere* is a favourite Virgilian clue: recall *ludus in undis* signalling acrostic *VNDIS* at *Ecl.* 9.34-8).[40] The last line of the *sphragis* famously echoes the first line of the *Eclogues* (*Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi*, *Ecl.* 1.1); the telestich, too, looks back at the opening of Virgil's first work to rewrite Tityrus' god-given *otium* (*deus nobis haec otia fecit*, *Ecl.* 1.6) in the context of Augustus' empire-expanding exploits at the margins of the Roman world, and so elegantly aligns the *deus* of the *Eclogues* with the *Caesar* of the *Georgics*.[41]

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[39] The telestich was first reported by W. Schmidt, *Vergil-Probleme* (Göppingen, 1983), 317-18.

[40] Cf. Katz (2016, n. 6), with Grishin (n. 6) on 9.34-8.

[41] Cf. M.A.S. Carter, '*Vergilium Vestigare*: *Aeneid* 12.587-8', *CQ* 52 (2002), 615-17, at 616 n. 4. J.J. Clauss, 'Once upon a Time on Cos: A Banquet with Pan on the Side in Theocritus *Idyll* 7', *HSCPh* 101 (2003), 289-302, at 298 n. 36, suggests that the *Georgics* telestich *OTIA*

Horace's *OTIA* acrostic is carefully worked to give multiple correspondences with Virgil's telestich. Both occur at points where the two poets actively negotiate poetic production in the newly autocratic Rome of the early 20s B.C.E., looking back at their careers so far; both set *otium* against imperial panegyric (*Caesar… uictor*, *G.* 4.560-1; *Caesaris inuicti*, *S.* 2.1.11). Horace's passage intricately echoes and inverts the structure of Virgil's: where Virgil's is a telestich at the end of the collection, Horace's is an acrostic at the beginning; where one line of Virgil's telestich falls in the passage praising Caesar (*G.* 4.562) and the next three in the passage on *otium* (563-5), Horace's acrostic devotes three lines to *otium* (*S.* 2.1.7-9) and then one to praise of Caesar (10).[42] Horace's Tiber (*S.* 2.1.8) matches Virgil's Euphrates (*G.* 4.561), and Horace's *alto* in the same line gestures to Virgil's *altum* (*G.* 4.560). His *aude* (*S.* 2.1.10) echoes Virgil's *audax* (*G.* 4.565), though now the 'audacity' is in writing imperial panegyric, rather than Virgil's youthful composition of the *Eclogues*.[43] I wonder, too, if Horace's *amor*

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confirms his *FONS* acrostic at *Ecl.* 1.5-8 (Clauss [n. 6]), since *otia* in *Ecl.* 1.6 occurs within the bounds of the acrostic. Regarding the telestich of the *sphragis*, I would add that while the Caesar reference does identify Augustus as the god who creates *otium* (*otia fecit*, *Ecl.* 1.6), it is still the poet who creates *OTIA* in the form of the telestich here – a typical tug-of-war of creative authority between poet and emperor (cf., perhaps, *certissimus auctor*, *G.* 1.432?)

[42] Gowers (n. 1 [2012]), 22: the relationship between *Satires* 1 and the *Eclogues* is 'sometimes neatly arithmetic, sometimes pointedly oppositional'.

[43] M. Robinson, 'Augustan Responses to the *Aeneid*', in M.J. Clarke, B. Currie and R.O.A.M. Lyne (edd.), *Epic Interactions: Perspectives on Homer, Virgil and the Epic Tradition: presented to Jasper Griffin by former pupils* (Oxford, 2006), 185-216, at 190, observes that *audacia* frames the *Georgics* in reference to Virgil's poetic endeavours (*G.* 1.40 *audacibus adnue coeptis*, 4.565 *audaxque iuuenta*), a feature Horace perhaps recognizes when he repeats

(*S.* 2.1.10) could be an anagrammatic play on *Maro*, subtly marking Virgil's absent presence through another wordplay buried in the acrostic-passage.[44]

The *sphragis* of Book 4 is rarely brought into play as an intertextual companion here – somewhat surprisingly, given the remarkable correspondence between the two passages.[45] We

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audax… audax at *Carm.* 1.3.25-7. In a forthcoming article, Robinson (n. 4 [*CQ*]) argues for acrostic *AUSUM* at *Aen.* 7.178-82; Virgil here develops not only the use of *audere* by Horace and himself as a marker of Virgilian poetics, but the use of *aude/ audax* in acrostic interchange that I identify in the *OTIA* acrostic/telestich.

[44] *Maro* produces six Latin anagrams, all of relevance to Virgil's works: *amor, Roma, ramo, armo, oram, mora*. The most famous pair is, of course, *amor/Roma*, which appears as a suppressed pun in Virgil's *hic amor, haec patria est* (*Aen.* 4.347); cf. M. Hanses, 'Love's Letters: An *Amor-Roma* Telestich at Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 3.507–10', in P. Mitsis and I. Ziogas (n. 6), 199-211 and J. Reed, '*Mora* in the *Aeneid*', in P. Mitsis and I. Ziogas (n. 6), 88-105, on *mora/amor/Roma* throughout the *Aeneid*. There are no explicit examples of *Maro/amor* in antiquity – for that we must wait for Herbert's virtuosic poem, *Lucus* 25, in the 1620s – but it surely underpins Virgil's own anagrammatic improvisations on these four letters. Hanses (at 208) suggests Ovid's *amor/Roma* palindrome-cum-telestich at *Ars* 3.507-10 suppresses a nod to Virgil; M. Malamud, 'Gnawing at the End of the Rope: Poets on the Field in Two Vergilian Catalogues', *Ramus* 27 (1998), 95-126, at 116 finds an (overly?) elaborate bilingual pun-anagram of *Maro* in *Ocnus* (*Aen.* 10.198); Virgil's *MARS* acrostic (n. 6 above) misspells his *cognomen* by a single letter: coincidence, or (attempted) signature?

[45] Horatian scholarship more frequently compares the opening of *S.* 2.1 to Virgil's *recusatio* of Augustan panegyric in *Georgics* 3.1-48: e.g. E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), 149 n. 2;

should certainly be cautious: our best guess for the two collections' dates of completion puts *Satires* 2 in or soon after 30 B.C.E.[46] and the *Georgics* around 29 B.C.E.[47] Priority is difficult to determine, and there is no guarantee that readers of *Satires* 2 would have been familiar with the end of Virgil's *Georgics* (or vice versa). But there can be no doubt that the two poets knew each other's work in draft; we should not rule out even this close a degree of textual interplay.[48] It seems clear to me that Horace's acrostic responds to Virgil's telestich and not the other way around:[49] Virgil's is embedded much more thoroughly not only within *Georgics* 4, but within his entire career overview, forming a neat ring-composition with the opening of the *Eclogues*.

Muecke (n. 31) on *S.* 2.1.11; K. Freudenburg, *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal* (Cambridge, 2001), 77-8.

[46] The latest *terminus post quem* is *S.* 2.6.55-6, referring to a minor crisis of veterans' land allocations in 30 B.C.E.: cf. Muecke (n. 31) ad loc.

[47] With few explicit *termini post* or *ante quem*, and no reliable external evidence *(VSD* 25 and 27 are dubious; cf. N. Horsfall, 'Virgil: His Life and Times', in id. [ed.], *A Companion to the Study of Virgil* [Leiden, 1995], 1-25), this seems the most sensible guess.

[48] Compare Propertius' prospectus of the *Aeneid* around 24 B.C.E., at *Elegiae* 2.34.61-6: he reworks Virgil's two proemic utterances (*Aen.* 1.1-4, 7.44-5), and picks up *suscitat arma* (2.34.63, of Virgil writing the *Aeneid*) from Virgil's use of it throughout his epic (of Jupiter: 2.618, 11.727-8; of leaders: 9.463, 10.263, 12.108, 498-9). Extraordinarily detailed imitation of another poet's unfinished work was not unusual: cf. R.J. Starr, 'The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World', *CQ* 37 (1987), 213-23; Gurd (n. 23), 13.

[49] The reverse dynamic is not entirely impossible. Recall Virgil's appropriation (from low to high genre, satire to epic) of Horace's description of a hostel kitchen fire (*Serm.* 1.5.73-4) in

Horace's treatment of Virgil throughout the *Satires* is teasing, double-edged, affectionate and sharply attentive. He boasts of the honour of his acquaintance, bringing out the big guns in his arsenal of friends in high places (1.6.55, 1.10.81), and praises his poetry – though not without irony – as *molle atque facetum* (1.10.44).[50] His first ten-poem collection, *Satires* 1, maps onto Virgil's ten *Eclogues* in elaborate and multifaceted ways, in parody as much as in deference.[51] In *S.* 1.5 he promises the reader an intimate glimpse of Virgil the man, not the author – but when the sonorous authorial mask has been ripped away, we see not an imposing man of letters but only a feeble and dyspeptic travelling companion (1.5.49).[52] Virgil both elevates Horace's poetry and serves as a target of its satire.

In the acrostic of *S.* 2.1, Horace appears in similarly parodic mode. He punctures Virgil's rather more high-minded *otia* by transforming it into practical considerations of exercise and diet, and debases poetic genre-shifts by attributing them not to age and maturity (*iuuenta*, *G.*

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his description of Troy aflame (*Aen.* 2.310-12); cf. R.G. Austin, *P. Vergilii Maronis Aeneidos liber secundus* (Oxford, 1964) on *Aen.* 2.312, 360.

[50] On *molle atque facetum*, cf. Zetzel (n. 22), 46; Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) ad loc.

[51] On the interplay between the *Eclogues* and *Satires* 1, cf. (e.g.) C.A. Van Rooy, '"*Imitatio*" of Virgil, *Eclogues* in Horace, *Satires*, Book 1', *Acta Classica* 16 (1973), 69-88; M.C.J. Putnam, 'Pastoral Satire' (review of Freudenburg [n. 24]), *Arion* 3 (1995), 303-16; J. Henderson, 'Virgil, *Eclogue* 9: Valleydiction', *PVS* 23 (1998), 149-76, at 169-71; Welch (n. 14); Gowers (n. 1 [2012]), 22.

[52] The epithets are somewhat ambiguous – do they apply to Horace, or Virgil, or both? Gowers (n. 1 [2012]) ad loc. notes the overtones of poetic reluctance. *crudis* also suggests not only youth (cf. *iuuenta*, *G.* 4.565) and *rusticitas* but outright immaturity: like a querulous child, Virgil must get his sleep on the journey.

4.565) or the interventions of poetic deities (*Cynthius*, *Ecl.* 6.3; *Musa*, *Aen.* 1.8) but to filthy lucre (*multa praemia*, *S.* 2.1.12). The subtleties of Virgil's *recusatio* in the *sphragis*[53] are flattened into a stark choice between rote imperial panegyric and ultimately unproductive, backwards-facing *otium*; the total cessation from writing that Trebatius urges (*S.* 2.1.5-6) is scarcely recognizable as the *otium* of Virgil's youth, a period of fruitful poetic production (*florentem… cecini*, *G.* 4.564-6). Indeed, the reminiscence of Virgil's Tityrus – at ease under the protection of his *deus*, free to sing whatever he chooses (*formosam… Amaryllida*, *Ecl.* 1.5) — sits strangely with the view of imperial patronage that Trebatius sketches out, where the poet must either retire or sing political panegyric to a prescribed tune. It is significant, then, that Horace positions his acrostic at the beginning of the collection, rather than placing it in a retrospective coda like Virgil's. Unlike Virgil's nostalgic turn in the *sphragis* to a now inaccessible past, *S.* 2.1 initiates seven more poems that trace out a different poetic trajectory – and that turn increasingly often to scenes of *otium* as the backdrop for political, poetic and personal dramas. Horace's book breaks through the impasse, developing obliquely political satire in place of either silence or craven panegyric. But for all that, besides the comic deflation

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[53] K. Volk, *The Poetics of Latin Didactic: Lucretius, Vergil, Ovid, Manilius* (Oxford, 2002), 148-65 observes that the beginning of *Georgics* 3 hints at, but do not firmly promise, a martial epic; *pace* Propertius (2.34.60-1) and Servius (*Aen. praef.*), Virgil's eventual epic does not narrate direct and extended praise of Augustus. The view that Virgil here *defers* his epic project rests on a post-Virgilian perspective; within the *Georgics* the ambition remains suppressed and the *recusatio* in earnest.

of Virgil's un-satirical pretensions, the acrostic's detailed imitation and transformation of Virgil's telestich still marks a quiet homage to a truly *doctus amicus*.[54]

Magdalen College, Oxford   TALITHA KEAREY

talitha.kearey@magd.ox.ac.uk

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[54] Hilberg (n. 7), 295 spots another *OTIA* acrostic at Ovid *Met.* 15.478-81, beginning with the last line of Pythagoras' speech and stretching into the narration of Numa's return to Rome:

'**O**ra cruore uacent alimentaque mitia carpant!'

Talibus atque aliis instructo pectore dictis

In patriam remeasse ferunt ultroque petitum

Accepisse Numam populi Latialis habenas.

Numa's first actions are to restore peace (*pacis… artes*, 484) – that is, *otium*? Ovid's distribution of the acrostic with one line separate from the next three perhaps mimics Virgil's and Horace's *OTIA* patterns, too. Ovid's only explicit mention of *otium* in *Met.* 15 alludes to the *Georgics*: *in otia natam | Parthenopen* (15.711-12; cf. Golden Age *otia* at 1.100). If this acrostic is deliberate, Ovid's peace-giving Numa is aligned with Virgil's and Horace's Augustus, a fitting compliment as the *Metamorphoses* nears its imperial endpoint. And might the recollection of the *Metamorphoses* at *Tr.* 1.7.25-6 nod back to Ovid's *OTIA*, as much as to his audience's leisurely reading (*nunc precor ut uiuant et non ignaua legentem | **otia** delectent admoneantque mei*)? *OTIA*, midway through *Met.* 15, lays the groundwork for Ovid's final ironic acrostic *INCIP-* at *Met.*15.871-5: see A. Barchiesi, 'Endgames: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15 and *Fasti* 6', in D.H. Roberts, F.M. Dunn and D. Fowler (edd.), *Classical Closure: Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature* (Princeton, 1997), 181-208, at 195.