

LIBER QVARTVS

I

PROPERTIVS

'Hoc quodcumque uides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est,
ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit;
atque ubi Nauali stant sacra Palatia Phoebō,
Euandri profugae concubuerē boues.
5 fictilibus creuere deis haec aurea templa,
nec fuit opprobrio facta sine arte casa;
Tarpeiusque pater nuda de rupe tonabat,
et Tiberis nostris aduena bubus erat.
quot gradibus domus ista Remi se sustulit! olim
10 unus erat fratrum maxima regna focus.
Curia, praetexto quae nunc nitet alta senatu,
pellitos habuit, rustica corda, Patres.
bucina cogebat priscos ad uerba Quirites:
centum illi in prato saepe senatus erat.
15 nec sinuosa cauo pendebant uela theatro,
pulpita sollemnes non oluere crocos.
nulli cura fuit externos quaerere diuos,
cum tremere patrio pendula turba sacro,
annuaque accenso celebrante Parilia faeno,
20 qualia nunc curto lustra nouantur equo.
Vesta coronatis pauper gaudebat asellis,
ducebant macrae uilia sacra boues.
parua saginati lustrabant compita porci,
pastor et ad calamos exta litabat ouis.
25 uerbera pellitus saetosa mouebat arator,
unde licens Fabius sacra Lupercus habet.

nec rudis infestis miles radiabat in armis:
miscabant usta proelia nuda sude.
30 prima galeritus posuit praetoria Lycmon,
magnaque pars Tatio rerum erat inter oues.
hinc Titius Ramnesque uiri Luceresque Soloni,
quattuor hinc albos Romulus egit equos.
33 quippe suburbanae parua minus urbe Bouillae;
36 hac tibi Fidenas longa erat isse uia.
35 et stetit Alba potens, albae suis omine nata,
34 et, qui nunc nulli, maxima turba Gabi.
37 nil patrium nisi nomen habet Romanus alumnus:
sanguinis altricem non putet esse lupam.
huc melius profugos misisti, Troia, Penates;
40 heu quali uecta est Dardana puppis aue!
iam bene spondebant tunc omina, quod nihil illam
laeserat abiegni uenter apertus equi,
cum pater in nati trepidus ceruice pependit,
et uerita est umeros urere flamma pios.
45 tunc animi uenere Deci Brutique secures,
uexit et ipsa sui Caesaris arma Venus,
arma resurgentis portans uictricia Troiae:
felix terra tuos cepit, Iule, deos;
si modo Auernalis tremulae cortina Sibyllae
50 dixit Auentino rura pianda Remo,
aut si Pergameae sero rata carmina uatis
longaeuum ad Priami uera fuere caput:
"Vertite equum, Danaï! male uincitis! Ilia tellus
uiuēt, et huic cineri Iuppiter arma dabit."
55 optima nutricum nostris lupa Martia rebus,
qualia creuerunt moenia lacte tuo!
moenia namque pio coner disponere uersu:
ei mihi, quod nostro est paruus in ore sonus!
sed tamen exiguo quodcumque e pectore riui
60 fluxerit, hoc patriae seruiet omne meae.
Ennius hirsuta cingat sua dicta corona:
mi folia ex hedera porrige, Bacche, tua,
ut nostris tumefacta superbiat Vmbria libris,
Vmbria Romani patria Callimachi!
65 scandentes quisquis cernit de uallibus arces,
ingenio muros aestimet ille meo!

Roma, faue, tibi surgit opus, date candida ciues
 omina, et inceptis dextera cantet auis!
 sacra diesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum:
 70 has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus.'

HOROS

'Quo ruis imprudens, uage, dicere fata, Properti?
 non sunt a dextro condita fila colo.
 accersis lacrimas cantans, auersus Apollo:
 poscis ab inuita uerba pigenda lyra.
 75 certa feram certis auctoribus, aut ego uates
 nescius aerata signa mouere pila.
 me creat Archytæ suboles Babylonius Orops
 Horon, et a proauo ducta Conone domus.
 di mihi sunt testes non degenerasse propinquos,
 80 inque meis libris nil prius esse fide.
 nunc pretium fecere deos et fallitur auro
 Iuppiter: obliquae signa iterata rotae,
 felicesque Iouis stellae Martisque rapaces
 et graue Saturni sidus in omne caput;
 85 quid moueant Pisces animosaque signa Leonis,
 86 lotus et Hesperia quid Capricornus aqua.
 89 dixi ego, cum geminos produceret Arria natos
 90 (illa dabat natis arma uetante deo):
 non posse ad patrios sua pila referre Penates:
 nempe meam firmant nunc duo busta fidem.
 quippe Lupercus, eques dum saucia protegit ora,
 heu sibi prolapso non bene cauit equo;
 95 Gallus at, in castris dum credita signa tuetur,
 concidit ante aquilae rostra cruenta suae:
 fatales pueri, duo funera matris auarae!
 uera, sed inuito, contigit ista fides.
 idem ego, cum Cinaræ traheret Lucina dolores,
 100 et facerent uteri pondera lenta moram,
 "Iunonis facito uotum impetrabile" dixi:
 illa parit: libris est data palma meis!
 hoc neque harenosum Libyæ Iouis explicat antrum,
 aut sibi commissos fibra locuta deos,
 105 aut si quis motas cornicis senserit alas,

umbrae quae magicis mortua prodit aquis:
 aspicienda uia est caeli uerusque per astra
 trames, et ab zonis quinque petenda fides.
 exemplum graue erit Calchas: namque Aulide soluit
 110 ille bene haerentes ad pia saxa rates;
 idem Agamemnoniae ferrum ceruice puellae
 tinxit, et Atrides uela cruenta dedit;
 nec rediere tamen Danaï: tu diruta fletum
 supprime et Euboicos respice, Troia, sinus!
 115 Nauplius ultores sub noctem porrigit ignes,
 et natat exuuiis Graecia pressa suis.
 uictor Oiliade, rape nunc et dilige uatem,
 quam uetat auelli ueste Minerua sua!
 hactenus historiae: nunc ad tua deuehar astra;
 120 incipe tu lacrimis aequus adesse nouis.
 Vmbria te notis antiqua Penatibus edit—
 mentior? an patriae tangitur ora tuae?—
 qua nebulosa cauo rorat Meuania campo,
 et lacus aestiuus intepet Vmber aquis,
 125 scandentisque Asis consurgit uertice murus,
 murus ab ingenio notior ille tuo.
 ossaque legisti non illa aetate legenda
 patris et in tenues cogeri ipse lares:
 nam tua cum multi uersarent rura iuueni,
 abstulit excultas pertica tristis opes.
 130 mox ubi bulla rudi dimissa est aurea collo,
 matris et ante deos libera sumpta toga,
 tum tibi pauca suo de carmine dictat Apollo
 et uetat insano uerba tonare Foro.
 135 at tu finge elegos, fallax opus: haec tua castra!—
 scribat ut exemplo cetera turba tuo.
 militiam Veneris blandis patiere sub armis,
 et Veneris pueris utilis hostis eris.
 nam tibi uictrices quascumque labore parasti,
 140 eludit palmas una puella tuas:
 et bene cum fixum mento decusseris uncum,
 nil erit hoc: rostro te premet ansa suo.
 illius arbitrio noctem lucemque uidebis:
 gutta quoque ex oculis non nisi iussa cadet.
 145 nec mille excubiae nec te signata iuuabunt

limina: persuasae fallere rima sat est.
 nunc tua uel mediis puppis luctetur in undis,
 uel licet armatis hostis inermis eas,
 uel tremefacta cauo tellus diducat hiatum:
 150 octipedis Cancri terga sinistra time!

II

Qui mirare meas tot in uno corpore formas,
 accipe Vertumni signa paterna dei.
 Tuscus ego et Tuscis orior, nec paenitet inter
 proelia Volsinios deseruisse focos.
 5 haec me turba iuuat, nec templo laetor eburno:
 Romanum satis est posse uidere Forum.
 hac quondam Tiberinus iter faciebat, et aiunt
 remorum auditos per uada pulsa sonos:
 at postquam ille suis tantum concessit alumnis,
 10 Vertumnus uerso dicor ab amne deus.

seu, quia uertentis fructum praecepimus anni,
 Vertumni rursus credidit esse sacrum.
 prima mihi uariat liuentibus uua racemis,
 et coma lactenti spicea fruge tumet;
 15 hic dulces cerasos, hic autumnalia pruna
 cernis et aestiuo mora rubere die;
 insitor hic soluit pomosa uota corona,
 cum pirus inuito stipite mala tulit.
 mendax fama, noces: alius mihi nominis index:
 20 de se narranti tu modo crede deo.
 opportuna mea est cunctis natura figuris:
 in quamcumque uoles uerte, decorus ero.
 indue me Cois, fiam non dura puella:
 meque uirum sumpta quis neget esse toga?
 25 da falcem et torto frontem mihi comprime faeno:
 iurabis nostra gramina secta manu.
 arma tuli quondam et, memini, laudabar in illis:
 corbis in imposito pondere messor eram.
 sobrius ad lites: at cum est imposta corona,
 clamabis capiti uina subisse meo.

cinge caput mitra, speciem furabor Iacchi;
 furabor Phoebi, si modo plectra dabis.
 cassibus impositis uenor: sed harundine sumpta
 †fauor† plumoso sum deus aucupio.
 35 est etiam aurigae species cum uerbere et eius
 traicit alterno qui leue pondus equo
 sub petaso; pisces calamo praedabor, et ibo
 mundus demissis institor in tunicis.
 pastor me ad baculum possum curuare uel idem
 40 sirpiculis medio puluere ferre rosam.
 nam quid ego adiciam, de quo mihi maxima fama est,
 hortorum in manibus dona probata meis?
 caeruleus cucumis tumidoque cucurbita uentre
 me notat et iunco brassica uincta leui;
 45 nec flos ullus hiat pratis, quin ille decenter
 impositus fronti langueat ante meae.
 at mihi, quod formas unus uertebar in omnes,
 nomen ab euentu patria lingua dedit;
 et tu, Roma, meis tribuisti praemia Tuscis,
 50 unde hodie Vicus nomina Tuscus habet,
 tempore quo sociis uenit Lycomedius armis
 atque Sabina feri contudit arma Tati.
 uidi ego labentes acies et tela caduca,
 atque hostes turpi terga dedisse fugae.
 55 sed facias, diuum Sator, ut Romana per aeuum
 transeat ante meos turba togata pedes.
 sex suberant uersus: te, qui ad uadimonia curris,
 non moror: haec spatiis ultima creta meis:
 STIPES ACERNVS ERAM, PROPERANTI FALCE
 DOLATVS,
 60 ANTE NVMAM GRATA PAVPER IN VRBE DEVS.
 AT TIBI, MAMVRRRI, FORMAE CAELATOR AENAE,
 TELLVS ARTIFICES NE TERAT OSCA MANVS,
 QVI ME TAM DOCILES POTVISTI FVNDERE IN VSVS.
 VNVM OPVS EST, OPERI NON DATVR VNVS
 HONOS.

III

Haec Arethusa suo mittit mandata Lycotae,

NOTES: BOOK FOUR

IV.1. Introductory Note

P. in a spirited hymn describes the splendors of Rome to a visitor (*hospes*) identified in 77–8 as the Babylonian astrologer Horos. The description, although highly compressed, brings out the magnificence of many of the conspicuous monuments of the poet's day, contrasting them with the humble buildings and traditions of primitive Rome. Rome thus appears in her early Augustan glory and behind this in a visionary Golden Age simplicity. The theme is one often reworked by poets in this period, but P. does not use it to illustrate the decline of Roman morality, corrupted by wealth and power, as Horace might. Instead he turns everything to a celebration of Augustus and his works, his building program, his reform of government, the revival of Roman religious institutions, the encouragement of interest in Roman history and myth, but without mentioning by name Augustus or the great poets and statesmen who helped him. The splendor emanates rather from the city herself. The poet then turns to the myth of Trojan origins and builds rapidly through the sweep of Roman history to a climax in which the poet announces his intention of undertaking aetiological poems in the Callimachean manner to celebrate the antiquities and traditions of Rome; this patriotic work will, he believes, win him a crown of fame.

Horos replies that it is not in the stars for P. to succeed in this vein. He parades his qualifications as a soothsayer, his genealogy, his past successes, the superiority of astrology over other methods of divination, and then turns to P.'s fortune. To prove his competence he reviews P.'s past history, birth, childhood, and beginnings as a poet, and then he concludes that P.'s *métier* is as an elegist, that experience has shaped his destiny and that he will live and die a lover.

The poem is a combination of the program poem and the *recusatio* and explains the range of poetic form and voice in the fourth book. Half the remaining poems of the book (2, 4, 6, 9 and 10) are Callimachean *aetia*, charming and learned accounts of Roman myths and traditions; half are elegies more like those in the first three books, but longer and less personal. Whether P. had at one time thought of writing a whole book or more of *aetia*, or whether he was simply experimenting with the form does not greatly matter; the fact is that this book stands apart from the others as more formal and sustained poetry. In some of the pieces the poet is experimenting with new material in a new sort of composition and somewhat different voice from what we have heard before. When he pub-

lished these pieces P. chose to collect them in a random anthology and wrote this poem to explain their diversity.

IV.1. Notes

- 2 *Phrygem*: noun rather than adjective; cf. 2.22.16. The thought of the Troad as part of the territories of Phrygia would seem to have been disparaging; cf. e.g. Vergil, *Aen.* 7.358 and 363; 12.75.
- 3-4 The couplet nicely associates the greatest of Augustus' early buildings with the setting of Evander's palace in *Aeneid* 8. The phrase *profugae concubuerue boues* evokes the Vergilian atmosphere of Arcadian serenity, while the four bronze bulls of Myron set around the altar of that temple (cf. 2.31.7–8) make the implied contrast with the Arcadian cattle of Evander a neoteric conceit.
- 3 *Nauali* . . . *Phoebo*: with *sacra*. Apollo is here characterized as *Nauali* because he was credited with Augustus' victory in the sea battles of Naulochus and Actium. *Palatia*: cf. 4.9.3. The plural is as regular as the singular, perhaps because of the two crests of the hill. Cf. e.g. Ovid, *AA* 3.119.
- 4 *concubuerue*: usually with sexual implication, but that seems inappropriate here.
- 5–6 "these golden temples have grown for terracotta gods; once a simple cottage was nothing to be ashamed of." The increase in the splendor of Roman temples has been paralleled by increase in ostentation in private dwellings. The Romans did not have images of their gods before the Etruscan period; the earliest cult image we know of was a terracotta of Jupiter Optimus Maximus by Vulca of Veii commissioned by Tarquinius Superbus, which was destroyed in the burning of the Capitoline temple in 80 B.C., but Pliny (*NH* 35.157–8) says terracotta images were still to be seen in his day, and they must have been considerably commoner in P.'s time.
- 7 *Tarpeiusque pater*: Jupiter, so called because the Capitoline also carried the name Mons Tarpeius; cf. 4.4.93. The temple of Jupiter Feretrius, founded by Romulus, is evidence that the hilltop was at least in part dedicated to Jupiter before the Tarquins built the first Capitolium there toward the end of the sixth century; Jupiter was regularly worshiped on heights, and this was a commanding height. Cf. Livy 1.55–6; Dion. Hal. 3.69.
- 8 *aduena*: If the reading is right, the sense is probably "the Tiber was a foreigner to our cattle"; i.e. the inhabitants of the Palatine village did not pasture their cattle along the Tiber banks or water them there, for it was a considerable distance from the one gentle approach to the Palatine down which the animals would have been driven. They found it safer and more convenient to pasture their cattle in the Forum and the valley of the Circus Maximus and to water them at the streams that ran through these areas. For the line of thought, cf. 36 *infra*. But the reading is doubtful; cf. Ovid, *Fast.* 2.68.
- 9–10 The MS readings *quod* (N) and *quo* (FLPΔ) make little sense; nor is the commonly accepted *qua* of the inferior MSS any help. The *domus* . . . *Remi* is usually identified as the Casa Romuli on the Palatine at the top of the *Scalae Caci*, but this was only a thatched hut, nor was the stair remarkable for anything but its antiquity, while here something splendid is required to contrast with the single hearth of the twin brothers. Probably the poet is referring to the temple of Quirinus on the Quirinal, no remains of which have as yet come to light (cf. P-A s.v.

- "Quirinus, aedes"). The reading should then be *quot* (Dieterich), the impressiveness of the stair of approach to a temple being a feature often remarked.
Remi: for the metrically impossible *Romuli*; cf. e.g. 2.1.23.
- 11-12 The Curia Hostilia, burnt in 52 B.C. in the riots following the murder of Clodius, was eventually succeeded by the Curia Julia, begun in 44 B.C. but not completed and dedicated until 29. It was a building of which Augustus was especially proud, and he put its façade on a number of his coins, from which it appears that the height of the main hall was one of its special features (cf. P-A s.v. "Curia Julia").
- 11 *praetexto . . . senatu*: dative, but with a word play on the ablative, so the Curia both "glitters for the Senate" and "glitters with the Senate," the scrupulous whiteness demanded of togas of men in the public eye being often mentioned (cf. e.g. Quintilian, *IO* 11.3.137).
- 13 *bucina*: It seems likely that the poet is thinking of a shepherd's horn (cf. 4.10.29), more in keeping with the rustic scene than the curved war trumpet as the means of summoning the Senate to debate (*ad uerba*).
- 15-16 Colored awnings and saffron water are mentioned by Lucretius in his descriptions of the theatre (2.416; 4.75-83), so they were not a novel luxury.
- 17 *fuūt*: For the long second syllable, see introduction, p. 24.
- 18 *patrio . . . sacro*: probably ablative with *pendula*, a regular construction with *pendere* in verse, where we expect *ab* + ablative in prose.
- 19-26 The Parilia, feast of Pales, goddess of the flocks, was celebrated April 21, the birthday of Rome, with bonfires of hay (*accenso . . . faeno*) over which the celebrants jumped in a rite of purification and a purification (*lustra*) of the flocks with a composition of ashes and blood probably obtained by gelding a horse (*curto . . . equo*); cf. g. Dumézit, *Archaic Roman Religion* (Chicago 1970) 1.220-24.
- 19 *celebrante . . . faeno*: The ablative may be taken as parallel to *patrio . . . sacro* in 18 or as an ablative absolute parallel to the *cum* clause.
- 20 *nunc . . . nouantur*: perhaps here "are still cerebrating," since we know of no lapse in this custom.
- 21-2 The Vestalia was celebrated June 9-15, when asses, Vesta's chosen animals, were decked with garlands. If line 22 continues the description of the Vestalia, the *boues* cannot be sacrificial victims, as Vesta did not receive blood sacrifice, but since we know the temple was cleaned at this time, there may have been a ritual involving the transport of cult objects by ox cart to some spring or stream for washing.
- 23-4 The Compitalia, a movable feast falling at the end of December or beginning of January, had as its central rite a purification (*lustratio*) of the city, when pigs, fattened for sacrifice, were driven round the bounds of the wards of the city to receive the pests and evil spirits besetting them before being offered to the Lares Compitales. A similar lustration was performed at the same time in the country, the victim being driven round the boundaries of the fields. Line 24 seems to imply that this animal could be a sheep, but no other ancient source supports this.
- 24 *ad calamos*: the simple shepherd's pipe, rather than the flute that accompanied more elaborate sacrifice.
- 25-6 *uerbera . . . saetosa*: i.e. strips of skin from which the hair had not been removed. The notion that the Luperci derived their dress and ritual of carrying strips of raw goatskin with which they struck those they encountered on the Lupercalia from primitive plowman's equipment would be mistaken; P. simply means the rite went back to a time when all Romans were plowmen. The Lupercalia was celebrated on February 15 in honor of a woodland god variously identified as Pan Lycaeus, Inuus, and Faunus; it was a fertility rite, and the priests, the Luperci, were divided into collegia, the Fabii, the Quintilii, and after 44 B.C. the Julii (cf. Suetonius, *Div. Iul.* 76). The festival was noted for its license.
- 28 *usta*: hardened in the fire.
- 29 *galeritus*: wearing the *galerus*, a conical cap of undressed hide.
Lycmon: evidently a Graecized form of Lucumo, an Etruscan title for the princes or priests who were the chief magistrates of their cities, here the eponymous hero of the Luceres, the Etruscans who aided Romulus in his war against Titus Tatius and the Sabines (cf. Dion. Hal. 2.37.2; Paulus ex Festo 118L).
- 31 *hinc*: "from these beginnings." In early Rome the people were divided among three tribes, the Ramnes (or Ramnenses) being those of Latin stock, the followers of Romulus, the Tities (or Taties) those of Sabine stock. The followers of Titus Tatius, and the Luceres those of Etruscan stock. The Luceres are here called *Soloni* from the town of Solonium (or *ager Solonius*), whence the original Etruscan allies of Romulus are said to have come. The district lay on the Latin side of the Tiber near Lavinium.
- 33 As the text stands, *minus* must be taken with *suburbanae* and *parua . . . urbe* read as ablative absolute: "of course Bovillae was less a suburb of Rome when the city was small." The word order seems slightly awkward, but no emendation is necessary. Bovillae was an ancient Latin town on the Via Appia near the twelfth milestone; between Rome and Alba this was the nearest center of habitation to Rome on the east.
- 36 The interchange of vss. 34 and 36 was first suggested by Mueller. This will make the thought lines consistent in the two couplets and put Alba, the more important for the Romans, before Gabii. The improvement is convincing.
hac: i.e. from Rome. Fidenae lay on the left bank of the Tiber about five miles above Rome, opposite the mouth of the Cremera, the Tiber tributary on which Veii was situated.
- 35 The omen of the white sow with thirty young prophesying the foundation of Alba Longa is immortalized in the *Aeneid* 8.42-8, 81-5.
- 34 See on 36 after 33.
nulli: "of no account."
Gabi: shortened form for Gabii, an ancient town of Latium twelve miles from Rome along the Via Praenestina. Famous for its temple of Juno (cf. e.g. Vergil, *Aen.* 7.682-3), it was, together with Ardea, the most familiar example of the great city of the past that had declined to insignificance.
- 37-8 The one touch of the moralizing satirist reflecting on the decay of his own times in the poem. P. uses it to make a transition; the thought is then interrupted by a long parenthesis, 39-54, and resumed at 55.
- 38 *non putet*: "he would not be able to suppose" sc. if he were to consider how unlike his forefathers he has become.
- 39 *melius*: "it was in better times"; the expression is compressed but the sense is clear from what has gone before.
- 40 *heu*: exclamation of emotion without particular color. Cf. Housman on Lucan 5.354.
- 43 *pater*: Anchises.

- 45 The heroism of the Decii was a classic example of Roman valor and patriotism; cf. 3.11.62 and note. In the *secures* of Brutus, which must be the fasces of the Roman magistrates, P. seems to be alluding not so much to Brutus' establishment of the Republic and holding of the first consulship as to his having put his sons to death for conspiring against the state, the axe in the fasces being the symbol of the right to execute offenders. Thus both are examples of patriotic self-sacrifice.
- 46 *Caesaris*: i.e. Augustus.
- 48 *felix*: "blessed by destiny" (Camps).
- 49-50 The sense is: "it was a land of good omen that received the gods of Iulus, for the land the Sibyl indicated in her prophecy was the country that was to be hallowed with the blood of Remus." The use of *si modo* here seems colloquial, loosely equivalent to "when" or "since." There can be no real conditional force in *si modo*; it is a simple sentence connective. For a more normal use, cf. 1.18.4.
- 49 *Auernalis* (Cumae, where the Sibyl prophesied to Aeneas, is near Lake Avernus; the tripod (*corina*) is the symbol of Apollo, god of prophecy, and therefore may be said to speak rather than the Sibyl, who was only the mouthpiece of the god.
- 50 *Auentino* . . . *Remo*: Remus took his augural station on the Aventine, while Romulus took his on the Palatine, for the observation of omens for the founding of Rome. The construction is probably dative of agent with a passive verb. *pianda*: "to be purified"; Romulus' murder of his brother after Remus desecrated the sacred wall of the city by leaping over it was probably necessary and ritual. Cf. 3.9.50 and note; Cicero, *Nat. De.* 3.94.
- 51 *aut si*: parallel to *si modo* in 49, "and since."
Pergameae . . . *uatis*: Cassandra; cf. 3.13.61-6 and notes.
sero rata: "fulfilled when it was too late"; here it would be the Greeks who did not believe her until Greece had been overrun by Rome.
- 52 *ad caput*: The picture seems to be Cassandra prophesying over the corpse of Priam, though P.'s fondness for the word *caput* and use of it in a variety of senses has made other editors doubt this and put the prophecy earlier (cf. also Lycophron, *Alexandra*). But the picture of the mad daughter breaking her mourning to prophesy destruction to her tormentors is too brilliant to reject.
- 57-8 The figure of 56 is now altered, but just as bold: "for should I try to set those walls in order in a patriotic poem." It is not clear whether he means an epic of the origins of Rome, or annals of the history of the city, or a description of the city in the aetiological manner of certain poems of this book. In view of the mention of Ennius in 61 the second possibility seems most likely.
- 59 *quodcumque* . . . *riui*: Poets are often described as drinking from the springs of inspiration (cf. e.g. 2.10.25-6; 3.1.3; 3.3.51-2), but here P. seems to be following Callimachus (*Hymn. Apol.* 110-12) in making his poem a stream flowing from his breast.
- 61 *hirsuta* . . . *corona*: Though P. seems to be praising Ennius, awarding him the grand wreath of the epic poet, the word *hirsuta* carries a reservation; if the wreath is grand, it is also bristly, suggestive of those ancient Romans clad in skins who figured at the beginning of the poem. The ivy that the poet asks for himself has glossy, shapely leaves that grow well apart along the stem.
- 62 *Bacche*: Any god may be invoked as patron, but P. seems to have been especially fond of Bacchus as the god of eloquence and inspiration in love poetry as well as wine and good humor. Cf. especially 2.30.13-40; 3.2.9-10; and 3.17. The ivy crown he claimed in 2.5.26, and in the program poem of the third book he asks the Muses for *mollia* . . . *serta* (3.1.19).
- 63-70 The boastfulness implicit in this final outburst is palliated only a little by being cast as a prayer to Bacchus and Rome, but P. has shown us earlier that his success gave him the right to boast (cf. especially 3.2). He was the most Callimachean of all Roman poets in an age when Callimachus was especially admired, and in turning to aetiology, one of Callimachus' richest veins, and the aetiology of Roman religion and institutions he may justly expect to enlarge his reputation.
- 65 A splendid evocation of the quality of the Umbrian landscape, especially of the towns that crown the heights near Trasimene and along the Topino-Clitumnus valley: Cortona, Assisi, Perugia, Spello. Here the towns sit firm and well defended on steep limestone hills above beautiful upland valleys, each town connected to its farmlands by a road that climbs zigzag up the slope.
- 66-8 In his final passage the poet picks up themes and ideas he has used earlier in his poem: the walls of the Umbrian towns (the walls of Rome 56-7), the favorable omens and augury for his work (the omens for the foundation of Rome (39-42). Rome is to grow in his poems as she has grown in history and the result will bring glory to Umbria.
- 71 Horos of Babylon, who identifies himself in 77-8, now speaks and continues to the end of the poem. His first words have a direct relation to the long speech P. has just finished, so he should be the *hospes* of line 1.
- 71-4 The astrologer replies to the poet that the omens are not favorable to his undertaking. The suggestion in 75-6 and 119 that he has arrived at this discovery by examination of the poet's horoscope and that this was a more or less formal consultation runs counter to the situation suggested at the beginning of the poem, but we need not take it as proof that we are dealing with more than one poem.
- 71 *uage*: "gone astray."
dicere fata: The reference seems to be to both the lavish use of the oracular voice throughout the first half of the poem and more particularly the prophecy of his own greatness in 61-70.
- 72 The office of foretelling the *fata* of any man belongs especially to the Parcae (cf. Catullus 64.303-83); P. has been *imprudens*, since he is not himself a soothsayer and cannot know what the *fata* are. Horos, by his science, is privy to the secrets of the future and is able to tell what the Parcae have in store: the filaments of the poet's fortune are not drawn from the propitious distaff.
non sunt . . . *condita fila*: "the thread is not put together" with reference to the spinning of the thread from numerous filaments. The phrase *condere fata* occurs in Vergil, *Aen.* 10.35, and P. may be imitating it.
- 73 *accersis*: "you will bring upon yourself."
auersus Apollo: virtually a nominative absolute.
- 75 *auctoribus*: "authorities, informants," i.e. the stars.
- 76 "ignorant of how to move the constellations on the bronzed ball." The instrument would appear to be a celestial globe. The globe itself might be of bronze (*aerata* for *aenea*; cf. 2.20.9-12), while the constellations were engraved or inlaid in silver, or *aerata* might refer to bronze mountings to indicate the ecliptic, etc.
- 77-8 Horos' lineage is distinguished. Orops of Babylon is unknown, but Babylon was considered the capital of astrological studies (cf. e.g. Horace, *Car.* 1.11.2-3). Archytas was a noted Pythagorean philosopher and mathematician of Tarentum

- of the fourth century (cf. Horace, *Car.* 1.28); Conon of Samos was the leading astronomer of Alexandria in the middle of the third century B.C., a contemporary of Callimachus. The chronology is wrong, for Horos' father could not be the son of Archytas of Tarentum, or Archytas a descendant of Conon. Either a completely different and otherwise unknown Archytas is meant, or Horos has constructed a bogus descent for himself from the names of distinguished astronomers of the past.
- 79 *propinquos*: Best taken as the subject of *degenerasse* with the sense: "the gods are my witnesses that the family (more particularly Horos himself) has not degenerated (from Conon)." Otherwise *me* (understood) is the subject of *degenerasse* and *propinquos* the object, and the sense is: "the gods are my witnesses that I have not dishonored (degenerated from) my relations (L-S s.v. "degenero" II.B; BB; Camps). The latter is more difficult, since the object in the accusative is not elsewhere personal.
- 81-6 The general sense of the passage is clear (the science of astronomy has degenerated and is pursued only for profit), but the Latin is knotty. The simplest interpretation seems to me best, to take the first part as straightforward: "now they (the astrologers) make their fee their gods, and Jupiter (whose will is displayed in the movements of the stars) is betrayed for gold." That is, anyone who is willing to pay can have a lucky horoscope. The series of astronomical influences that follows is then in apposition to *Iuppiter*; though they remain true, their interpretation is falsified by these mountebanks in hope of a fat fee. Horos, on the other hand, does not shrink from revealing the truth, as he shows in 89-98. On this interpretation *Iuppiter* has double value as the supreme deity and the equivalent of *caelum*, and *stellas* in 83 must be altered to *stellae*.
- 82 *obliquae . . . rotae*: "the constellations of the slanting ring that are (yearly) repeated." The band of the zodiac lies oblique to the equator; the sun's rising progresses through these constellations in an annual cycle.
- 83-4 Jupiter and Venus were regarded as the lucky planets, Mars and Saturn as the unlucky. Mars was the fiery planet, Saturn the leaden one. Cf. Cicero, *De Div.* 1.85.
- 86 *lotus*: At its setting a constellation seems to disappear into the sea. At rising and setting constellations have special influence.
- 87-8 The couplet that appears here in the MSS: *dicam: "Troia cades, et Troica Roma resurges;" / et maris et terrae longa sepulcra canam.* is clearly out of place and attempts to relocate it in the poem have not been successful. I believe it belongs after 3.9.48, where it will make good sense and bridge an awkward gap, so I have set it there.
- 89 Arria and her sons are otherwise unknown.
produceret: "escorted" on their departure from Rome (BB). Such a *productio* was a solemn occasion, as was the *reductio* on the return from a successful campaign.
- 93-4 *Lupercus*: a cognomen carried by a number of Roman families. If we read *equi* with the MSS, it is not clear whether Lupercus was crushed by his horse's falling on him, or whether he was killed by an enemy while trying to minister to the wounded animal. Heinsius' conjecture *eques* for *equi* would remove this vagueness and the awkwardness of the repetition *equi . . . equo*. Then Lupercus was shielding his own wounded face when his horse fell under him and threw him.
- 95-6 Gallus, as BB points out, was either an *aquilifer* serving in the first cohort of the legion in the century of the *primus pilus*, or was himself *primus pilus* responsible for guarding the eagle.
- 97 *auarae*: Her greed, be it for glory or for spoils, is proved by her refusal to heed the warnings of Horos.
- 98 *inuito*: sc. *me*.
fides: here "fulfilment."
- 99 *Cinarae*: Cinara is as unknown as Arria.
Lucina: the Roman goddess of childbirth, often identified with Juno.
- 101 *Iunonis*: The genitive of the better MSS can be defended on the grounds that the votive offering belongs to the divinity (so BB), and this will fit with the active sense of *impetrabile* here: "that will be successful."
- 102 One can hardly feel that the prescription of Horos in this case was unusual, or that one would have had to have recourse to astrology to arrive at it, so the extravagant metaphor of his boast is somewhat comical.
- 103 *harenosum . . . antrum*: the oracular shrine of Jupiter Ammon at the oasis of Siwah in the Libyan desert. It is not necessary to suppose there was an oracular cave connected with the shrine, and no one else mentions one (cf. e.g. Lucan 9.511-48). Any chamber in which oracles were given was likely to be shadowy and mysterious.
- 104 *fibra*: Divination by examining the entrails, especially the liver, of a sacrificial animal (haruspicy) was an Etruscan science, not Roman. An Etruscan bronze model of a liver inscribed with the names of the gods governing its various areas is preserved at Piacenza.
- 105 Augury was a Roman science, but in its Roman form could answer questions only by yes and no. Divination by the flight of birds in other forms was widespread, and it seems to be this the poet is alluding to.
senserit: "observed (and interpreted)."
- 106 The reference is to hydromancy, or necromancy, in which the spirits of the dead are summoned into a bowl of water. Augustine says blood was added to the water and that this method of divination was Persian in origin (*Civ. Dei* 7.35).
- 107 *uia*: an almost punning use of the word; the poet means both the "course" of the heavens with its changes and the "way" to true divination. The word play is continued by *trames* in the pentameter, which is both the "path" to truth and the "band" of the zodiac.
uerus: with the notion of *uerax* as well (Camps).
- 108 *ab zonis quinque*: The celestial sphere was divided like the terrestrial into five zones (frigid poles and torrid equator with temperate zones between).
- 109-18 Many poets told the story of how Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia to secure favorable winds for the Greek fleet assembled at Aulis preparatory to sailing for Troy. It is used by Lucretius in the first book of the *De Rerum Natura*, 80-101, as the glaring example of the monstrosities to which religion persuades men. P. seems to follow Lucretius in seeing the story as an example of faulty divination. Calchas was able to see what would secure the departure of the fleet but could not foretell the destruction of the fleet on the return voyage.
- 109 *Calchas*: chief priest of the Greek army; he is usually shown as divining primarily by bird signs (Homer, *Il.* 1.69; 2.299-332; Aeschylus, *Agamem.* 104-59).
- 110 *ad pia saxa*: The rocks are said to be *pia* because, had the fleet not departed, the

- Greeks would have been saved from the outrages and crimes against the gods that brought their destruction.
- 114-18 On the return voyage of the Greeks from Troy, Pallas, angered because during the sack of Troy Ajax the son of Oileus had raped Cassandra in her temple, sent a storm in which Ajax was shipwrecked and killed. Nauplius, king of Euboea and father of Palamedes, whose trial and death at Troy were unjustly compassed by Ulysses, to avenge his son lit false beacon fires on the proverbially treacherous shores of his island and lured the returning Greeks to destruction on the rocks.
- 116 *natat*: The verb means to float or bob on the surface; the picture is of the wreckage following the destruction of the fleet.
- 117 *cillige*: The word is normally a weak synonym for *amare* and seems oddly out of place here, but SB's correction of it to *delige* does not recommend itself. It seems better to take *dilige* as ironic.
- uatem*: Cassandra, priestess of Apollo; cf. 3.13.61-6 and notes.
- 118 Cassandra took refuge in the temple of Pallas during the sack of Troy and clung to the statue of the goddess.
- 119-50 Horos now turns to P. and continues with his horoscope for the poet to the end of the poem.
- 119 *hactenus historiae*: "enough of these stories."
- 120 *aequus*: "resigned to." Presumably he is alluding here to the continuance of P.'s servitude to love and failure to win the heart of the beloved (cf. 137-46).
- 123 *Meuania*: a city of Umbria on the Clitumnus.
- rorat*: equivalent to *madet*, "drips"; cf. also Silius Italicus 6.645-8. In the valleys of Umbria the morning mists are often very thick in the winter season, but the verb is more appropriate to a stream or watercourse than to a mist-drenched town.
- 124 *lacus . . . Vmber*: a shallow lake in the plain below Assisi, now drained.
- 127-8 The ashes of the dead were regularly collected by the nearest relations present at the funeral. It is interesting that the son, though he is still a minor and his mother is presumably present, assists in this office.
- 128 *in tenues . . . lares*: Though the distinction is not always scrupulously maintained, the Penates were the gods of the family, while the Lares were the gods of the land; thus P. is speaking precisely, as the next couplet shows, of the reduction of his estates. Cf. 3.3.11 and note.
- 130 *pertica*: the measuring rod with which land grants were apportioned to soldiers. From the way P. speaks, it seems clear that he lost a large part of his lands in the confiscations following the Perusine War of 41-40 B.C., as Vergil had nearly lost his after the formation of the triumvirate in 43. Thus P. will have lost his father sometime not long before the Perusine War and have received the *toga virilis* (131-2) not long thereafter.
- 131 *bullae . . . aurea*: the locket-like amulet worn round the neck by freeborn youths (Cicero, *Verr.* 2.1.151-152). The custom seems to be of Etruscan origin. At the time of the assumption of the *toga virilis* the *bullae* was dedicated to the Lares (Persius 5.30-31).
- 132 *libera . . . toga*: here the *toga* without the stripe, the *toga virilis*.
- 133 This would be a strange and inflated way of saying "you began to write poetry"; probably the change of tense from imperfect to present is important here and the meaning is rather "since then Apollo has been inspiring you with a few things

- from his store of poetry," the emphasis being on the continuance of the inspiration into the present and the slenderness of P.'s talent.
- 134 Like most young men of good family P. must have been educated for a career in law and politics; like Vergil (*Vita Donati* 15-16) and Ovid (*Tr.* 4.10.17-40) he abandoned his career early, if he ever began it.
- 135-46 Now Horos turns from the poet's past to the future. P. has proposed a change of theme, and Horos has warned him against this (71-4); here he counsels him to continue in the vein of elegy. The fact that no poem in this book is a clear cut example of the sort of elegy that had made P. famous (though poems 7 and 8 come close to it), while all the poems are by definition *elegi*, may be of some significance: if he wishes to change his theme, he may do so only within his prescribed form, and he must not abandon the sort of work that has made him famous.
- 135 *fallax opus*: Certainly SB's interpretation of *fallax* as "tricky, technically difficult" is best.
- 136 It sounds as though the poet had already had bitter experience with imitators and plagiarizers (cf. 3.1. 12-18). However great his admiration of, and debt to Callimachus and Philetas, he seems to speak as an innovator outside any Roman tradition.
- 137-8 The military figure begun in 135 is a common one in poetry, and especially elegy, perhaps because military service was such a common experience. Cf. e.g. 1.6.29-30; 3.5.1-2; Ovid, *Am.* 1.9. The confusion here between the poet as a loyal soldier serving under the standard of Venus and the poet as *utilis hostis* of the Amores is interesting. The latter must mean something like "a good target"; he is repeatedly the victim of their darts. From this point on the figure shifts through a succession of metaphors.
- 139-40 I take the sense of this couplet to be that whatever conquests P. may make in love, there will always be some girl who eludes his efforts, so he must continue always a lover and an elegist.
- 141-2 Most editors take the figure of this couplet to be drawn from fishing, though there is no agreement among them on the interpretation. The most satisfactory is Camps', who suggests the *uncus* is the fishhook, the *ansa* the fisherman's gaff, and the *rostrum* the big, heavy hook of the gaff. This seems to me an unlikely interpretation, since it involves giving ordinary words unusual meanings and inventing an implement we do not know from other sources. It seems far more likely that the figure comes from building, the *uncus* being the hook used to hoist blocks into place (cf. Horace, *Car.* 1.35.20), the *ansa* the clamp with which blocks were fastened to one another (Vitruvius 2.8.4). The picture is one of the victim hauled up by the chin in the first phase of love and secured in permanent position by clamps before he can shake loose from the temporary entanglement. For a parallel picture of Necessitas as a building goddess and one who seems to use people in her construction, cf. Horace, *Car.* 1.35.17-20 and 3.24.1-8. The use of *rostrum* as a synonym for nose seems to have been contemptuous, so it is best to interpret it as the bent end of the clamp and read *suo* (FLPA) rather than *tuo* (N).
- 143 It seems excessive to read into this verse more than that her domination over him will be complete and he will be at her disposal twenty-four hours a day (cf. 3.16).
- 145 *excubiae*: i.e. guards on watch.

- 145-6 *signata . . . limina*: The idea seems to be that he would seal her door as one might a storeroom or strongroom.
- 146 *persuasae . . . sat est*: cf. 4.7.15-20.
- 147-50 Camps is almost certainly right in interpreting the last statement of the poem as an assurance to the poet that he need not fear any of the ordinary dangers, that his fate is to come from love. He points out that such immunity is traditional (cf. 2.27.11-12, where the dangers are specified as storm and war, and 3.16.13-20). *licet* in 148 is then simply "although" with the corollary "you have nothing to fear from these" implicit. But the phrasing is not straightforward, and after the rush of figurative language in which Horos has been expressing himself we may be justified in seeing here an ambiguity in which metaphors from the *sermo amatorius* figure: whether he is far out on the seas of love, whether he is only at the outset of an affair, or whether he be in love's cataclysm, he must beware of the constellation of the crab.
- 149 *cauo*: best taken as the ablative of the noun *cauum* and construed with *tremefacta*, "shaken in its hollow vault" (Camps). The hollow vault is, of course, the Underworld.
- 150 *Cancri terga* = *Cancrum*; cf. P.'s fondness for *hoc caput* as a synonym for himself. *sinistra*: "baleful"; cf. *a dextro . . . colo* in 72. The sinister influence of the constellation Cancer presumably comes from something in P.'s horoscope. In Petronius (*Sat.* 39.8) Cancer is Trimalchio's birth sign and is associated with wealth and sea commerce, but the value of this evidence must be doubtful.

IV.2. Introductory Note

This poem, the first of the aetiological poems P. proposed writing in 4.1.69-70, purports to be a monologue of Vertumnus, a mysterious god of whom a statue stood on the Vicus Tuscus behind the temple of Castor on the ridge between the Forum Romanum and the Forum Boarium, the region known as the Velabrum (cf. M.C.J. Putnam, "The Shrine of Vortumnus," *AJA* 71, 1967, 177-9; P-A s.v. "Signum Vortumni"). In it he explains his origin, his name, and lists various guises in which he may appear, ending with his blessing on Rome and a final epigram on the creation of the statue suitable for inscription on the base.

The poem is constructed in five paragraphs of unequal length: the announcement of the speaker's identity (1-6), false derivations of his name (7-18), the true derivation of his name with a catalogue of the forms he may take (19-48), his blessing on Rome (49-56), and a final epigram on the creation of his statue (57-64).

IV.2. Notes

- 1 *Qui mirare*: The statue speaks, seeming to address a curious passer-by. It is not necessary to suppose that the statue had a variety of attributes at any one time; more likely it was dressed in different costume for various occasions, and it was this that caused wonder.
- 2 *signa paterna*: From the next couplet one infers that P. uses this phrase with the meaning "lineage," but *signum* is the regular word for a statue, and ancient Roman gods were commonly addressed as *pater*, so the meaning "the statue types in which I am worshiped as *pater*" may be implicit.

- 3-4 *nec paenitet inter / proelia Volsinios deseruisse focos*: The phrase *inter proelia* can only mean that the god was summoned to the side of the Roman army by the ancient rite of *euocatio*, in which the chief god of a besieged city was promised a temple and worship at Rome if he would allow the city to be captured (cf. Livy 5.21.1-5; Macrobius, *Sat.* 3.9.1-9).
- 3 *nec paenitet*: "and yet I do not repent."
- 5 *turba*: used both as synonym for *populus* (cf. 55-6 *infra*) and with specific force; standing in the Velabrum between the Forum Romanum and the Forum Boarium the statue watched over the busiest parts of Rome.
- nec templo . . . eburno*: This is simply to say that the Velabrum statue stood in the open air, not that he took no pleasure in his temple on the Aventine. Play with the letters and sounds of the name Vertumnus may account for the choice of the epithet *eburno*, but the ivory doors of the temple of Apollo Palatinus were famous (cf. 2.31.12-14).
- 7-10 The Velabrum, a part of the slope on the river side of the ridge between the Forum Romanum and the Forum Boarium, was popularly supposed to have got its name from *uela*, with the notion that the Tiber had once run closer to the base of the Palatine (cf. Varro, *LL* 5.43-4; Tibullus 2.5.33-4). It was the place where the river in flood was supposed to have deposited the basket carrying Romulus and Remus, and as the stream of Cloaca passed through it, it must have played a part in the ferry traffic across the Tiber (cf. L. A. Holland, *Janus and the Bridge*, Rome 1961, 162-5).
- 7 *hac*: "through here."
- 9 *alumnis*: The word was perhaps chosen to suggest the story of Romulus and Remus.
- 10 *dicor*: i.e. the etymology is a folk etymology and not sound, as is also the one that follows in 11-18.
- 11-12 If the MSS are right in *credidit* in 12, then we must accept Barber's postulation that a couplet containing a subject for the verb has fallen out between 10 and 11, a theory further supported by the otherwise abrupt construction with *seu*. His notion that this couplet might have contained a folk etymology of the name explaining it from the exchange of goods in the adjacent fora (*ex mercibus uertendis*) is highly attractive.
- 11 *fructum praecepimus*: BB and Camps take the meaning to be "I receive the first fruits," with the perfect expressing repeated action. But the phrase might more easily be translated "I instructed them about the fruits," and this would fit better with the pentameter.
- 12 *rursus*: "on the other hand."
- credidit*: One must supply some subject like *populus*.
- sacrum*: with *fructum*; here perhaps best translated "dedicated."
- 13-18 Three sorts of change in fruits are suggested in the next three couplets: first change in color and size that comes with ripening, then the change of varieties of fruits with the cycle of the seasons, and last the change that is produced by grafting. All these changes may figure in the teachings of the god.
- 13-14 The unusual verbs here, *uariat* ("changes color") and *tumet*, contain a nice play on the syllables of the god's name.
- 14 *coma*: a word so commonly used of vegetation in Latin that it had almost completely lost its figurative quality.