CHAPTER 1

The City in Horace's sermo
Physical Spaces and Political Spaces

Sandra Citroni Marchetti

In a well-known passage of *Satire* 1.6 (lines 111–21), Horace depicts himself as strolling in an urban space. That the city in question is Rome can be gleaned from the overall context of the satire, and from some passing references to individual places: the Circus, the Forum, Campus Martius. The poet's aim is not to describe the city, but to represent himself as a private citizen, who, having chosen a disengaged and modest life, is free to move around as he pleases. In this perspective, the space surrounding him can easily expand or shrink: maintaining his own simple lifestyle, the poet can leave the city and venture to the very ends of the peninsula (104–5 *nunc mihi curto | ire licet mulo uel si libet usque Tarentum*, 'To-day, if I will, I may go on a bob-tailed mule even to Tarentum'),[1] or retreat within the confines of his own house (114–15 *inde domum me | ad porri et ciceris refero laganique catinum*, 'then homeward I go to my dish of leeks and peas and fritters'). Through the underlying thread of simplicity, the differences between interior and exterior also become less marked: the same character who eats leeks and chickpeas at home enquires, when he is out of the house, about the price of vegetables and spelt, thereby reducing the rich market of Rome to his own modest domestic sphere: 111–12 *quacumque libido est, | incedo solus, percontor quanti holus ac far*, 'Wherever the fancy leads, I saunter forth alone. I ask the price of greens and flour.'

Specific places appear consonant with the poet's disengagement, with the addition of equivocal features that make them more interesting: the evening shadow of the Circus and Forum where the poet wanders is not inert, but animated by a population of charlatans (113–14 *fallacem circum uespertinumque pererro | saepe forum, adsisto diuinis*, 'often toward evening I stroll round the cheating Circus and the Forum. I stop by the fortune-tellers'). The daytime, working appearance of the Forum is also evoked, but from within the house, as something to be rejected: as he goes to bed,

[1] All translations from Horace in this chapter are by H. R. Fairclough, lightly revised.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the poet knows that tomorrow morning he will *not* be going to the place given over to the city's business affairs (119–20 *deinde eo dormitum, non sollicitus, mihi quod cras | surgendum sit mane, obeundus Marsya*, 'Then I go off to sleep, untroubled with the thought that I must rise early in the morning and bump into Marsyas'). We will return to this presently, just as we will speak of the relationship there is, in this part of the satire, between spatial representation and the temporal dimension: the depicted urban space is not, in fact, the place of a single, occasional stroll, but is bound up with the poet's everyday routine.

One structural element of Horace's description of himself as a private citizen free to move around as he wishes is the opposition between himself and another character who does not enjoy such freedom of movement due to the fact that he is a politician. Horace relates to this figure in a dialogic manner, as 'I' vis-à-vis 'you': 'me, a private citizen, vis-à-vis you, Tillius, a public figure': lines 24–5 *quo tibi, Tilli, | sumere depositum clauom fierique tribuno? | inuidia adcreuit, priuato quae minor esset*, 'What good was it to you, Tillius, to assume the stripe once doffed and become a tribune? Envy fastened on you afresh, but would be less, were you in a private station'; 107 *obiciet nemo sordis mihi, quas tibi, Tilli*, 'No one will taunt me with meanness as he does you, Tillius'; 110 *hoc ego commodius quam tu, praeclare senator | . . . uiuo*, 'In this [way] . . . I live more comfortably than you, illustrious senator.' Although the setting of this personal interaction is the concrete space of the city, in which the characters are physically represented, a more abstract and conceptual spatial ambit is also evoked: that of the city as polis, as an entity distinguished by social relations, institutions, forms of government. *Sat.* 1.6 begins by addressing the issue of personal suitability for public office and then moves on to the theme of the individual choice to participate in or abstain from public affairs. But beneath this explicitly treated political theme, which, moreover, is transcended by Horace's higher poetic message, we can also discern some discourse structures that tie this satire in with texts of a strictly political nature.

In an article written many years ago, I suggested that in a passage of *De clementia* Seneca may be recalling the verses in which Horace describes himself while taking a stroll in Rome:[2]

[2] Citroni Marchetti 1983: 90–1. This connection between Horace and Seneca was also then made, independently, by Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990: 249–50, and reiterated by Malaspina 2001: 287. Dio Chrysostom 6.60 (cited by Malaspina, and previously in Préchac 1921, ad loc.) confirms the topical nature of these lines, but differs in that it does not contain the direct apostrophe to a figure who holds power or aspires to it.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> 'ista' inquis 'seruitus est . . .' . . . (2) quam multa tibi non licent, quae nobis beneficio tuo licent! possum in qualibet parte urbis solus incedere sine timore, quamuis nullus sequatur comes, nullus sit domi, nullus ad latus gladius; tibi in tua pace armato uiuendum est . . . (4) nostros motus pauci sentiunt, prodire nobis ac recedere . . . sine sensu publico licet; tibi non magis quam soli latere contingit. (Sen. *Clem.* 1.8.1–4)

> 'That' you say 'is servitude . . .' . . . (2) How many things there are which you may not do, which we, thanks to you, may! It is possible for me to walk alone without fear in any part of the city I please, though no companion attends me, though I have no sword at my home, none at my side; you, amid the peace you create, must live armed . . . (4) Our movements are noticed by few; we may come forth and retire . . . without the world being aware; you can no more hide yourself than the sun. (tr. Basore)

The possibility of a direct allusion is suggested by Seneca's expression *possum in qualibet parte urbis solus incedere*, which is very similar to Horace's *quacumque libido est, incedo solus*. But what interests us here is the more general affinity – thematic and structural – between the two texts.

The passage from *De clementia* lies within a sketchy dialogue between the philosopher and the emperor. Responding to Nero's complaints about the limitations imposed on him by his role, which for him is a form of slavery, Seneca compares their respective conditions of life, and in particular extols the freedom of movement he enjoys in the urban space precisely thanks to the emperor.

If we go back to what is one of the prototypal texts of political literature, Xenophon's *Hiero*, here too we find two characters who engage with each other as an 'I' and a 'you'. Once again the issue is the difference between the life of the private man and the life of the public man, in this case in the person of a tyrant. Hiero, who was a private citizen before becoming a tyrant, is questioned by the poet Simonides about the joys and woes of the two conditions. Simonides holds that a tyrant enjoys the greatest number of pleasures through all the senses, but Hiero contradicts him, stating that tyrants have fewer pleasures than private citizens who lead a modest life. The first pleasure that Hiero says he lacks is linked to the sense of sight and the enjoyment of spectacles: the tyrant is deprived of this pleasure because he cannot move freely. There are things worth seeing in every place and city, and private citizens can go wherever they wish to see spectacles. Tyrants, by contrast, cannot, because it is not safe for them to go to any place where they are not stronger than everyone present. Indeed, under no circumstances can they leave their city, lest they be toppled from power:

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς διὰ τῆς ὄψεως θεάμασι λογιζόμενος εὑρίσκω μειονεκτοῦντας τοὺς τυράννους. ἄλλα μέν γε ἐν ἄλλῃ χώρᾳ ἐστὶν ἀξιοθέατα· ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων ἕκαστα οἱ μὲν ἰδιῶται ἔρχονται καὶ εἰς πόλεις ἅς ἂν βούλωνται καὶ εἰς τὰς κοινὰς πανηγύρεις, ἔνθα ἃ ἀξιοθεατότατα δοκεῖ ἀνθρώποις συναγείρεται. (12) οἱ δὲ τύραννοι οὐ μάλα ἀμφὶ θεωρίας ἔχουσιν. οὔτε γὰρ ἰέναι αὐτοῖς ἀσφαλὲς ὅπου μὴ κρείττονες τῶν παρόντων μέλλουσιν ἔσεσθαι, οὔτε τὰ οἴκοι κέκτηνται ἐχυρά, ὥστε ἄλλοις παρακαταθεμένους ἀποδημεῖν. (Xen. *Hier.* 1.11–12)
>
> In the first place, then, taking the objects that we perceive by means of vision, I find by calculation that in regard to sight-seeing, despots are worse off. In every land there are things worth seeing: and in search of these private citizens visit any city they choose, and attend the national festivals, where all things reputed to be most worth seeing are assembled. (12) But despots are not at all concerned with missions to shows. For it is risky for them to go where they will be no stronger than the crowd, and their property at home is too insecure to be left in charge of others while they are abroad. (tr. Marchant)

Hiero comes back to the motif of freedom of movement later as well: private citizens can go anywhere without fear of being killed, while for tyrants everywhere they go is like travelling in enemy territory; they spend their lives in arms, and move around with armed guards. Private citizens feel safe in their homeland, while tyrants have enemies within their own city, and are even in danger in their own homes. Therefore, the tyrant not only cannot move around freely in his own city, or travel from one city to another, but he does not even have a domestic space where he can shelter: we might say that he does not have any ground beneath his feet:

> εὐθὺς γὰρ τοῖς μὲν ἰδιώταις ... ἔξεστιν ὅποι ἂν βούλωνται πορεύεσθαι μηδὲν φοβουμένους, μή τις αὐτοὺς ἀποκτείνῃ, οἱ δὲ τύραννοι πάντες πανταχῆ ὡς διὰ πολεμίας πορεύονται. αὐτοί τε γοῦν ὡπλισμένοι οἴονται ἀνάγκην εἶναι διάγειν καὶ ἄλλους ὁπλοφόρους ἀεὶ συμπεριάγεσθαι. (9) ἔπειτα δὲ οἱ μὲν ἰδιῶται, ἐὰν καὶ στρατεύωνταί ποι εἰς πολεμίαν, ἀλλ᾽ οὖν ἐπειδάν γε ἔλθωσιν οἴκαδε, ἀσφάλειαν σφίσιν ἡγοῦνται εἶναι, οἱ δὲ τύραννοι ἐπειδὰν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῶν πόλιν ἀφίκωνται, τότε ἐν πλείστοις πολεμίοις ἴσασιν ὄντες ... (10) ... ὁ δὲ τύραννος οὐδ᾽ ἐπειδὰν εἴσω τῆς οἰκίας παρέλθῃ ἐν ἀκινδύνῳ ἐστίν ... (*Hier.* 2.8–10)
>
> To begin with ... private citizens are free to go wherever they choose without fear of being killed. But all despots move everywhere as in an enemy's country; at any rate they think they are bound to wear arms continually themselves, and to take an armed escort about with them at all times. (9) Secondly, in the event of an expedition against an enemy's

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> country, private citizens at least think themselves safe as soon as they have come home. But when despots reach their own city, they know that they are now among more enemies than ever. (10) . . . the despot is not out of danger even when he passes within the palace gates . . . (tr. Marchant)

As a remedy to this condition, Simonides describes the behaviour of the good ruler, who succeeds in being loved by everyone.[3] Following his advice, Hiero could also, thanks to the security he would thus acquire, go wherever he wants:

> καὶ ἐξείη μὲν ἄν σοι ἕνεκεν ἀσφαλείας, εἴ ποι βούλοιο, θεωρήσοντι πορεύεσθαι, ἐξείη δ' ἂν αὐτοῦ μένοντι τοῦτο πράττειν. (*Hier.* 11.10)
>
> And you will be free to go wherever you choose, so far as safety is concerned, to see the sights, and equally free to enjoy them in your home . . . (tr. Marchant)

And in general he will have – and these are the final words of the work – happiness without envy:

> κἂν ταῦτα πάντα ποιῇς, εὖ ἴσθι πάντων τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις κάλλιστον καὶ μακαριώτατον κτῆμα κεκτήσῃ. εὐδαιμονῶν γὰρ οὐ φθονηθήσῃ. (*Hier.* 11.15)
>
> And if you do all these things, rest assured that you will be possessed of the fairest and most blessed possession in the world; for none will be jealous of your happiness. (tr. Marchant)

Condensed into this concluding formula of *Hiero* are the beginning and end of the overall discourse in which Horace places himself in opposition to Tillius, where in fact we find the words for envy and happiness: 6.24–6 *quo tibi, Tilli . . . fieri . . . tribuno? inuidia adcreuit . . .*, 'What good was it to you, Tillius, to . . . become a tribune? Envy fastened on you afresh . . .'; 130–1 *his me consolor uicturum suauius . . .*, 'I comfort myself with the thought that I shall live more happily . . .'. Xenophon's political text and Horace's satire have a number of themes in common, which in turn are sustained by the same essential discourse structures. *De clementia* contains the same themes and structures, and seems to attest that the good government hoped for in *Hiero* has been achieved in Nero's Rome.[4]

[3] On this theme in *Hiero* (and for an analysis of the entire work), see Strauss 2013.

[4] In Seneca's text, however, are elements that seem to belie the condition of security that Simonides attributed to the virtuous governor. In Xenophon, wicked tyrants are armed at all times; but, for Seneca, the good governor must also 'live armed': *Clem.* 1.8.2. Further on, Seneca partially corrects this observation, declaring that the good ruler is armed in order to keep the peace, the tyrant to instil fear: *Clem.* 1.12.3 (cf. 1.13.5: the good prince carries arms 'for adornment').

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Each of the texts we have considered talks about a different political regime. In Horace's satire, the concrete city space refers to a potentially open political space: the figures we see moving around the streets of Rome are free to choose between political abstention or participation on the basis of their own personal inclinations.[5] But the political and social situation was uncertain and unstable, which is perhaps reflected in the very writing of the poem. As we will try to ascertain, situations and characters tend in fact to transcend their immediate concreteness, referring to something else as well: something suited to satisfying the search (conducted in a cheerful, light-hearted manner) for a principle of authority.

We have seen that the poet expresses a refusal to go the following day to the Forum – to the space in the Forum devoted to business. But there is a place to which he probably will go, even though he does not talk about it. The place in question is a domestic interior: the home of Maecenas. That this interior is part of the poet's city routine is implicitly conveyed through the qualification of himself as Maecenas' *conuictor*: 47 *quia sim tibi, Maecenas, conuictor*, 'because I consort with you, Maecenas'.[6] On the other hand, explicit reference to Maecenas' home comes in the evocation of a memory, in the recollection of the event that marked a turning point in his life. In the account of that episode the house is not strictly speaking visualised: it is the space, which must be entirely imagined, where he meets the eminent figure. It is worth asking ourselves whether the constituent elements of this 'perfect scene'[7] do not perhaps also evoke another scenario well known to the culture of the age.

The meeting is in reality a test for the young man, who would like to be able to frequent the house. The eminent figure observes his attitude, and detects a sign of *pudor* in the difficulty he has in expressing himself (56–7 *ut ueni coram, singultim pauca locutus | – infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari*, 'On coming into your presence I said a few faltering words, for speechless shame stopped me from saying more'). This first positive impression, which is 'physical' in nature, is borne out by the words of the young man, who does not boast a high social rank but openly acknowledges his modest condition (58–60 *non ego me claro natum patre, non ego*

[5] For more about the social and political background of the satire, see Rudd 1966; Du Quesnay 1984; Rudd 1993b; Oliensis 1998: 30–1; Gowers 2012: 214–17.

[6] The qualification of *conuictor* describes a fact and at the same time refers to the point of view and the comments of the people who see him going to Maecenas' residence. In Maecenas' invitation to share his company the term *amicus* (62 *in amicorum numero*) is used. Later, Augustus would invite Horace to consider himself his *conuictor* (not his *amicus*): Augustus, *Ep.* 37.1.

[7] Fraenkel 1957: 103–4: 'a perfect dramatic scene, emotionally strong and rich in undertones.'

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

circum | *me Satureiano uectari rura caballo,* | *sed quod eram narro*, 'My tale was not that I was a famous father's son, not that I rode about my estate on a Satureian steed: I told you what I was'). The 'few words' (*pauca*) uttered by the eminent figure, remaining in step with the 'few words' of the poet, establish a prevalent dimension of silence (60–1 *respondes, ut tuus est mos,* | *pauca*, 'As is your way, you answered little'). The young man is dismissed, and will not return to the house for a long time. Finally he is summoned once again, and admitted to the house to be among Maecenas' friends (61–2 *abeo, et reuocas nono post mense iubesque* | *esse in amicorum numero*, 'I withdrew; then, nine months later, you sent for me again and bade me join your friends').[8] Horace concludes the recollection of his meeting with Maecenas (62–4) by reiterating the idea, mentioned previously (58), that he had been appreciated by the powerful figure not because of his father's social position, but for his own moral qualities; on the other hand, he attributes all the merit for those moral qualities to his father, and to the upbringing he received thanks to the wisdom and far-sightedness of this simple, modest man (65–99).[9]

Some of the elements of this episode can also be found elsewhere in the depiction of Horace and his relationship with Maecenas: the motif of *pudor*, the positive influence of the father, silence,[10] moral purity[11] and the great theme of friendship.

The elements on which the meeting with Maecenas is structured bear a remarkable resemblance to something that can be found in texts from a later period, but which reconstruct a very ancient cultural set-up that was in turn well known to the Roman elite of the first century. This was the school of Pythagoras, together with the admission ritual envisaged for adepts. Young men who wished to live with Pythagoras were not accepted immediately, but subjected to a test, which was also physiognomic. According to the reconstruction by Iamblichus,[12] Pythagoras wanted to learn from the young man's words what relationship he had with his

[8] For the kind of friend Horace intends to be, see Freudenburg 1993: 205–9; Labate 2005.

[9] Cf. *Sat.* 1.4.105–31. The educative role played by Horace's father is discussed in Citroni Marchetti 2004.

[10] On the dimension of silence, cf. *Sat.* 1.4.17–18; 2.6.57–8. Bad behaviour involves interrupting the silence of Maecenas: *Sat.* 1.3.63–6. See also the brief remarks of *Sat.* 2.6.44–5.

[11] Besides *Sat.* 1.6 (62–4; 69–71), see *Sat.* 1.9.49 *domus hac nec purior ullast*, 'No house is cleaner than that.'

[12] The question of the reliability of the representation offered by Iamblichus is dealt with among others by Ferrero 1955, who sees in it a trace of a collection of commentaries that 'preserve intact the flavour of a remote antiquity', composed in Roman circles soon before the time of Nigidius Figulus, and by Cornelli 2013, who considers it a late document that reproduces a Hellenistic ideal of life.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

parents; he then looked to see whether he laughed, remained silent or spoke too much. During the test, great importance was attached to the ability to remain silent, which was associated with modesty and reserve.[13] Those who passed the test were sent away nonetheless, and kept outside for a long period, so that their behaviour could be observed: in particular to see whether they had learnt to despise glory to the point of rejecting honours. If a young man was deemed fit, after a further period devoted to silence, he was admitted to the inner space where it was possible to see Pythagoras:

> προσιόντων τῶν νεωτέρων καὶ βουλομένων συνδιατρίβειν οὐκ εὐθὺς συνεχώρει, μέχρις ἂν αὐτῶν τὴν δοκιμασίαν καὶ τὴν κρίσιν ποιήσηται, πρῶτον μὲν πυνθανόμενος πῶς τοῖς γονεῦσι καὶ τοῖς οἰκείοις τοῖς λοιποῖς πάρεισιν ὡμιληκότες, ἔπειτα θεωρῶν αὐτῶν τούς τε γέλωτας τοὺς ἀκαίρους καὶ τὴν σιωπὴν καὶ τὴν λαλιὰν παρὰ τὸ δέον . . . (72) καὶ ὄντινα δοκιμάσειεν οὕτως, ἐφίει τριῶν ἐτῶν ὑπερορᾶσθαι, δοκιμάζων πῶς ἔχει βεβαιότητος καὶ ἀληθινῆς φιλομαθείας, καὶ εἰ πρὸς δόξαν ἱκανῶς παρεσκεύασται ὥστε καταφρονεῖν τιμῆς. μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο τοῖς προσιοῦσι προσέταττε σιωπὴν πενταετῆ . . . αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰ μὲν ἄξιοι ἐφαίνοντο τοῦ μετασχεῖν δογμάτων, ἔκ τε βίου καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἐπιεικείας κριθέντες, μετὰ τὴν πενταετῆ σιωπὴν ἐσωτερικοὶ λοιπὸν ἐγίνοντο καὶ ἐντὸς σινδόνος ἐπήκουον τοῦ Πυθαγόρου μετὰ τοῦ καὶ βλέπειν αὐτόν. (Iambl. *VP* 71–2)[14]
>
> He would not immediately accept young men who came and wanted to study with him, until he had put them through an examination and made a judgement. He asked first how they got on with their parents and other members of the family. Then he considered whether they laughed at the wrong moment, whether they could be silent and whether they talked too much . . . (72) The person he had examined was then sent away and ignored for three years, to test his constancy and his genuine love of learning, and to see whether he had the right attitude to reputation and was able to despise status. After this, he imposed a five-year silence on his adherents . . . If the candidates were found worthy to share in the teachings, judging by their life and general principles, then after the five-year silence they joined the inner circle: now, within the veil, they could both hear and see Pythagoras. (tr. Clark)

Let us come back now to the poet's city walk. As we said, it fits into the cyclic time of a typical day, described in *Sat.* 1.6 from the afternoon onwards: after the walk, he retreats into his home and has a frugal dinner; he then sleeps, rises, studies, has another walk or engages in gymnastic

[13] On the value attached by Pythagoras to moral purity, see *VP* 70; 74; 75; 245; 246. Pythagoras was also considered the 'founder' of friendship: see, for example, *VP* 70 'All these may be summed up in the one word "friendship", and Pythagoras is the acknowledged founding father of it all.'

[14] See also 94.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

activities outdoors (indicated by the act of applying oil to one's body), bathes, lunches, again very frugally, and has a further rest, accompanied by study inside the house.

Horace's daily routine has been likened to that of the Epicurean philosophers, with reference to Cicero's *Ad familiares* 9.20 and to Epictetus 3.24.39.[15] Horace's disengagement does effectively have an Epicurean dimension. But perhaps it should also be borne in mind that, besides private and individual behaviour, something broader and more important is involved here as well, namely, the city, not just as the physical space where forms of behaviour proliferate, but also as an entity towards which they are responsible, that is, as a political space. Although he shies away from office, Maecenas is a public figure with high-level responsibilities. In the passage from Cicero, and even more so in that of Epictetus, Epicureanism is viewed negatively; and Horace is quite aware of the denigratory attitude towards this philosophy. Inviting a friend to his home, he would playfully describe himself as a 'hog from Epicurus' herd' (*Epist.* 1.4.16). But in the same text in which he talks about his admission to the house of his future patron, tact perhaps suggested the wisdom of underemphasising his Epicurean profile, even though Maecenas himself adhered to Epicureanism.[16] The daily routine that Horace describes is that of a 'philosopher' in a very broad sense,[17] or rather, of a person influenced by moral philosophy. But there is perhaps something else as well. It cannot be ruled out that the sophisticated, elite audience, above all Maecenas and the chosen group of young intellectuals in his circle, might also have recognised in that description an ennobling patina (albeit *ironically* ennobling) of Pythagorean origin. In Iamblichus, after the account of the ritual of admission to Pythagoras, we find a description of the typical daily routine of the Pythagorean philosophers, that is, of those young men who managed to definitively enter the inner sphere of the school. In the morning they strolled on their own in quiet, secluded places, preferably woods and sanctuaries; then they gathered together, usually in sanctuaries or the like, where they studied and worked on improving their character. Then they oiled themselves and did gymnastics; they had a frugal lunch of bread and

[15] See Lejay 1911 (note on line 128); Armstrong 1986: 277 sees in the passage an 'Epicurean day', to be interpreted as a 'leisure class' topos.

[16] Labate 2012: 413–14 observes that with regard to Maecenas' eccentric and relaxed lifestyle even friends could be cited 'as evidence for the prosecution', citing *Epod.* 14.9–15, with its reference to Bathyllus. But the intention of *Sat.* 1.6 is precisely to attest to the purity and morality of the character.

[17] See Freudenburg 2010: 280.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

honey; then they dealt with the affairs of the community and the outside world, by drawing up laws; then they took another walk, bathed, dined (on bread and vegetables) and read. Finally, each of them retired to their own abode:

> τοὺς μὲν ἑωθινοὺς περιπάτους ἐποιοῦντο οἱ ἄνδρες οὗτοι κατὰ μόνας τε καὶ εἰς τοιούτους τόπους, ἐν οἷς συνέβαινεν ἠρεμίαν τε καὶ ἡσυχίαν εἶναι σύμμετρον, ὅπου τε ἱερὰ καὶ ἄλση καὶ ἄλλη τις θυμηδία ... μετὰ δὲ τὸν ἑωθινὸν περίπατον τότε πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐνετύγχανον, μάλιστα μὲν ἐν ἱεροῖς, εἰ δὲ μή γε, ἐν ὁμοίοις τόποις. ἐχρῶντο δὲ τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ πρός τε διδασκαλίας καὶ μαθήσεις καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἠθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν. (97) μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοιαύτην διατριβὴν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἐτρέποντο θεραπείαν. ἐχρῶντο δὲ ἀλείμμασί τε καὶ δρόμοις οἱ πλεῖστοι, ἐλάττονες καὶ πάλαις ἔν τε κήποις καὶ ἐν ἄλσεσιν ... ἀρίστῳ δὲ ἐχρῶντο ἄρτῳ καὶ μέλιτι ἢ κηρίῳ ... τὸν δὲ μετὰ τὸ ἄριστον χρόνον περὶ τὰς πολιτικὰς οἰκονομίας κατεγίνοντο ... δείλης δὲ γινομένης εἰς τοὺς περιπάτους πάλιν ὁρμᾶν, οὐχ ὁμοίως κατ' ἰδίαν, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ ἑωθινῷ περιπάτῳ, ἀλλὰ σύνδυο καὶ σύντρεις ποιεῖσθαι τὸν περίπατον, ἀναμιμνησκομένους τὰ μαθήματα καὶ ἐγγυμναζομένους τοῖς καλοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι. (98) μετὰ δὲ τὸν περίπατον λουτρῷ χρῆσθαι, λουσαμένους τε ἐπὶ τὰ συσσίτια ἀπαντᾶν... ἔπειτα ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον χωρεῖν, ὡς πρὸ ἡλίου δύσεως ἀποδεδειπνηκέναι. χρῆσθαι δὲ καὶ οἴνῳ καὶ μάζῃ καὶ ἄρτῳ καὶ ὄψῳ καὶ λαχάνοις ἑφθοῖς τε καὶ ὠμοῖς. (Iambl. *VP* 96–8)
>
> They took a morning walk, alone, and in places where peace and quiet were appropriate, where there were shrines or sacred groves or other delights of the heart ... Only after the morning walk did they meet each other, preferably in sanctuaries, but otherwise in similar places. They used this time for teaching, study and amendment of character. (97) After this period of study they turned to the care of the body. Most were oiled and ran races; a smaller number wrestled in the gardens and groves ... For lunch they had bread with honey or honeycomb ... After lunch they were concerned with the management of the community ... When evening came, they went for walks again, but not in private as they did in the morning: they walked in twos and threes, recalling what they had learnt and exercising themselves in their admirable practices. (98) After the walk they took a bath, then went to their mess ... Then they began dinner, so as to finish before sunset. They had wine, barley-bread and wheat bread, a side-dish, cooked and raw vegetables. (tr. Clark)

Maecenas was a charismatic figure, around whom Horace himself built an aura of purity (*Sat.* 1.9.49 *domus hac nec purior ullast*, 'No house is cleaner than that'). In *Satire* 1.6 his choice of friends stems from his ability to judge moral good and evil: line 63 *qui turpi secernis honestum*, 'you, who

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

discern between fair and foul'. Horace in turn, even in his free movements through the city space, is not an isolated individual who gives himself up to disengagement; instead, he is the adept of a community of friends that bear witness to the same values.[18] These friends relate to Maecenas' home as a physical space but also as a cultural space, and as a political space, insofar as their intellectual speculations are directed towards the city and are destined to contribute to guiding its course and to influencing collective behaviour. By adding a light touch of 'Pythagoreanism' to the description of his walk around Rome and the difficult admittance to the house of Maecenas, Horace could, albeit in his openly displayed disengagement, allude to a sphere that embraced high values; and he alludes to it in a way that is at once culturally sophisticated and, above all, ironic and jokey.

The irony with which Horace sometimes refers to Pythagoreanism (*Epod.* 15.21; *Sat.* 2.6.63; *Epist.* 2.1.52) can be related each time to belief in metempsychosis, which was a traditional object of sarcasm on the part of rationalist thinkers,[19] and does not necessarily extend to more general aspects of Pythagorean teaching. A literary ironic intent should probably be acknowledged in *Sat.* 2.6.60–4, where the poet speaks about simple food, symbolised by the broad bean, the 'relative of Pythagoras', which he will eat in the country. In Horace's choice to indicate the *faba Pythagorae cognata* as his favourite food, I would not rule out that he may have been influenced by a wish to ironically oppose Callimachus, who had warned, 'according to Pythagoras' rule', against touching broad beans, a bitter food (fr. inc. sed. 553 Pf.).[20]

Horace's express refusal to take part in the daytime and business life of the Forum may bring to mind two declarations made by Socrates. One is the affirmation in the *Theaetetus* (173c–d) that philosophers 'do not know the way to the agora': and this is close in some ways to the position of Horace, who shows himself to be extraneous to the pulsating life of the city, in a 'philosophical' frame of mind. There is however a fundamental difference between the philosopher of the *Theaetetus* and the figure of Horace as satirical poet: indeed, the philosopher does not observe those

[18] *Satire* 1.9 attests that Horace did not appear to be an isolated figure in the eyes of external observers either, but the member of a restricted community. On the fact that in *Sat.* 1.6 Horace presents his morality, and not his poetry, as the criterion for which Maecenas chose him, see Oliensis 1998: 32–3; Schlegel 2000: 111.

[19] See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 318.

[20] As regards the examination of conscience which Horace claims to practise in *Sat.* 1.4.133–9, it cannot be considered a specifically Pythagorean trait (cf. Lejay 1911, ad loc. and 98–9).

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

around him (*Tht.* 174b), while for Horace satire stems from observation of the people he sees around him (*Sat.* 1.4).[21]

The other affirmation is the one made by Socrates in the *Apology* about his habit of speaking with anyone he meets at the bankers' tables in the agora:[22] here the physical space resembles the one Horace talks about, but the position of the two figures is different, because while both are alien to business affairs, Horace does not have the same attitude as Socrates, who frequents the agora to converse with his fellow citizens. This divergence is not casual or episodic: indeed, when, in the *Epistles*, Horace takes on a stance that comes much closer to Socratic teaching,[23] his distance from the physical space and ways of life of the city is destined to become more marked. Some passages in the *Epistles* that attest the poet's distance from the concrete city space have (as we shall shortly see) 'political' implications: they indicate that a strong principle of authority has been imposed, with an inhibiting effect on the political aspirations of individuals. And on this point the difference from Socrates' teaching is significant.

The gap in time between the passages from the *Satires* that we have considered thus far and the passages of the *Epistles* that we will consider saw the transition from the triumviral period to the Augustan regime. The 'political' sensibility with which Horace lived through this shift is also revealed, I suggest, through references to more ancient texts illustrating aspects of power. These references may be more or less explicit, and more or less conscious. And we should also remember that texts as celebrated as those under discussion were influential not only through the recollection of individual passages, but also by prompting reflection on the overall issues they addressed.

In *Epist.* 1.16.17, the expression *tu recte uiuis, si curas esse quod audis*, 'you live right, if you take care to be what people call you', relates to the

[21] An absorbed detachment from the city space does however accompany the reflection leading up to poetic composition: in *Sat.* 1.9 the poet, in order to concentrate on his *nugae*, has spiritually erased what is around him. For the importance the city has in Horace's satirical verse, Welch 2001: 181 aptly cites Pl. *Phdr.* 230d, where Socrates declares that the fields and trees cannot teach him anything, and that he can only learn from men in the city.

[22] Pl. *Ap.* 17c. Both here and in the *Theaetetus* the philosopher is extraneous to the court (*Ap.* 17d; *Tht.* 173d). Horace declares his extraneousness to the court in *Sat.* 1.9; instead, he appears to frequent it in *Sat.* 2.6 (line 23), where he describes himself as unpleasantly involved in city life. It is worth recalling that Iamblichus attributes refusal to frequent the agora and the court, and likewise other public places, to followers of the Pythagorean life (*Protrepticus* p. 72).

[23] I am speaking here of Socratic teaching expressed directly, more markedly present in the *Epistles*, and do not wish to cast doubt on the attitude of Socratic irony identified in the satires by Anderson 1963. For a brief review of the debated issue of the importance of 'school' philosophies in the *Epistles*, see Moles 2002.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

core of Socratic teaching, according to which, in the words of Xenophon, the best, surest and fastest way to earn the appreciation of others is to try to be truly just as one wants to appear: Xen. *Mem.* 2.6.39 συντομωτάτη τε καὶ ἀσφαλεστάτη καὶ καλλίστη ὁδός ... ὅ τι ἂν βούλῃ δοκεῖν ἀγαθὸς εἶναι, τοῦτο καὶ γενέσθαι ἀγαθὸν πειρᾶσθαι, 'if you want to be thought good at anything, you must try to be good in it; that is the quickest, the surest, the best way' (tr. Marchant); cf. Cic. *Off.* 2.43 *praeclare Socrates hanc uiam ad gloriam proximam et quasi compendiariam dicebat esse, si quis id ageret, ut qualis haberi uellet, talis esset*, 'as Socrates used to express it so admirably, "the nearest way to glory – a short cut, as it were – is to strive to be what you wish to be thought to be" (tr. W. Miller).[24] The Socratic recommendation also appears in Book 1 of the *Memorabilia*: 1.7.1 ἀεὶ γὰρ ἔλεγεν, ὡς οὐκ εἴη καλλίων ὁδὸς ἐπ' εὐδοξίαν ἢ δι' ἧς ἄν τις ἀγαθὸς τοῦτο γένοιτο, ὃ καὶ δοκεῖν βούλοιτο, 'For he always said that the best road to glory is the way that makes a man as good as he wishes to be thought' (tr. Marchant). In this case the context has an even greater affinity with the passage of Horace's epistle where, as we shall see shortly, the poet singles out, amongst cases of possible incongruence between the opinion of others and real qualities, an example of a strictly political nature. In the passage from Xenophon, in fact, Socrates, in advising anyone wishing to achieve great fame not to boast about qualities they do not possess, stresses that far the worst form (πολὺ μέγιστον) of bragging (ἀλαζόνεια) is to make out that one is capable of governing the city when one does not know how to do so: cf. *Mem.* 1.7.5 ὅστις μηδενὸς ἄξιος ὢν ἐξηπατήκοι πείθων, ὡς ἱκανὸς εἴη τῆς πόλεως ἡγεῖσθαι, 'the man who, being worthless, has gulled his city into the belief that he is fit to direct it'.[25]

The addressee of the epistle needs to ask himself if the great fame he already enjoys is really grounded in his genuine moral qualities. As an example of praise that he would clearly recognise as not being appropriate to himself, Horace introduces a strictly political element by citing a panegyrical expression exalting the privileged bond between the city, the ruler and the divinity – an address which can only refer to Augustus:[26]

> siquis bella tibi terra pugnata marique
> dicat et his uerbis uacuas permulceat auris:

[24] These two passages are cited in Kiessling-Heinze 1957, ad loc. (see also McGann 1969: 74).

[25] In the passage of Book 2 of *Memorabilia* quoted above such a case is contemplated, but is inserted in a long series of examples on the same plane as the others. In a purely political text like *The Prince* of Machiavelli, the 'Socratic' precept can be reversed: the prince must seem good, but not be so (ch. 18).

[26] On these verses indirectly praising Augustus, see Lowrie 2007.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> 'tene magis saluum populus uelit an populum tu,
> seruet in ambiguo qui consulit et tibi et urbi
> Iuppiter', Augusti laudes agnoscere possis.
> Hor. *Epist.* 1.16.25–9

> Suppose a man were to speak of wars fought by you on land and sea, and with words like these flatter your attentive ear:
>
> 'May He, to whom both thou and Rome are dear,
> Keep secret still, which is the fuller truth,
> The love of Rome for thee, or thine for her!'
>
> you would see in them the praises of Augustus.

In *Satire* 6, the character who wants to devote himself to politics announces that his programme is to take care of citizens, the city, the empire and Italy.[27] Aside from the irony implicit in the context, this slogan must have been common for those embarking upon a political career. *Epistle* 16 indicates the potential final outcome of such a commitment, that is, identification between the city and its head, under the protection of the supreme divinity. Here too the context is ironic, in that the young addressee has no grounds for laying claim to such praise. But these lines also indicate something real and concrete: namely, that in this period in Rome the highest position was occupied by Augustus, and therefore lay beyond the possible aspirations of anyone else. Here lies the fundamental difference with respect to Socratic teaching concerning engagement in the polis. Socrates taught the young men who approached him (some also hoping to acquire the capacity to become a tyrant) the virtue required to govern the city.[28] He did not dissuade them from political life, but set just one limit on their ambitions: this was represented by virtue. In fact, according to Socrates, only those in possession of virtue could rule over the city and take care of it.[29] Instead, in the 'Socratic' teaching that Horace applied to Rome there was another and much more concrete limit on political ambitions: the fact that the highest position in the city was occupied by Augustus.

The figure at whom Horace directs his teaching in *Epist.* 1.16 belongs to the physical, social and political space of the city. By contrast the author's teaching is expressed from outside Rome, from the countryside, as the

[27] Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.34–5 *promittit ciuis, urbem sibi curae,* | *imperium fore et Italiam*, 'he takes it upon himself to look after his fellow-citizens and the city, the empire and Italy'.

[28] See Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.16; 1.2.39, 48, 64; 3.1.1; 4.2.11. The Socratic invitation to 'know thyself' is also linked to the encouragement to participate actively in politics: cf. 3.7.9.

[29] This Socratic teaching is expressed most directly in *Alc. 1* 134c; 135b.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

opening lines of verse declare. But the epistle concludes with yet another spatial image: the escape from a prison and annihilation in death. This disquieting ending cannot not appear to signal a sense of unease; and the fact that the escape and the annihilation take place within a comparison of power relations may also signify a political unease.[30]

In the following two epistles (before the final pair, which deal with Horace's own poetry), the depicted space narrows, and the city is practically no longer present. If in *Sat.* 6 Maecenas' house was only present as an object of memory, insofar as it was the origin of the poet's actual condition, here, on the other hand, the houses of the powerful which young men aspire to enter are the subject of the discourse.[31] The powerful man's house is now distinguished by the requirements of a court rather than the characteristics of a private dwelling where one lives in simplicity and purity of friendship.[32] The poet, who imparts instruction regarding the appropriateness of the choice and about suitable behaviour, rounds off his teaching by depicting himself as being isolated within a restricted rural space.

In *Epist.* 18, however, a broader spatial view opens up round the youthful figure of Lollius: a city space, in that he is accustomed to exercise in the Campus Martius; an external military space, in that he took part in the Cantabrian Wars with Augustus (depicted as dominating the whole space from West to East); and a private space, in that he sometimes enjoys himself on his country property (Hor. *Epist.* 1.18.44–66):

tu cede potentis amici
lenibus imperiis, quotiensque educet in agros
Aetolis onerata plagis iumenta canesque,
surge et inhumanae senium depone Camenae,
cenes ut pariter pulmenta laboribus empta:
Romanis sollemne uiris opus, utile famae
uitaeque et membris, praesertim cum ualeas et
uel cursu superare canem uel uiribus aprum
possis. adde, uirilia quod speciosius arma

[30] We should, however, avoid superimposing Augustus on the tyrannical figure of the *rector Thebarum* (see McGann 1960). The image of death does not necessarily imply the idea of suicide, as Kilpatrick 1986 notes.

[31] The intention attributed to the addressee of *Epist.* 1.17.11–12, the wish to benefit his family members and himself, reflects a narrowing of political vision, in that it replaces (and in a very subdued tone) the well-known formula whereby, in both Greece and Rome, a citizen proposed to provide for his family, friends and 'the city'. On this theme, see Citroni Marchetti 2016.

[32] In this new context, Horace's code becomes (as noted by Kiernan 1999: 153) a code of prohibitions and rigorous self-restraint.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

non est qui tractet: scis, quo clamore coronae
proelia sustineas campestria. denique saeuam
militiam puer et Cantabrica bella tulisti
sub duce, qui templis Parthorum signa refigit
nunc et, siquid abest, Italis adiudicat armis.
ac ne te retrahas et inexcusabilis absis:
quamuis nil extra numerum fecisse modumque
curas, interdum nugaris rure paterno:
partitur lintres exercitus, Actia pugna
te duce per pueros hostili more refertur;
aduersarius est frater, lacus Hadria, donec
alterutrum uelox Victoria fronde coronet.
consentire suis studiis qui crediderit te,
fautor utroque tuum laudabit pollice ludum.

> . . . do you yield to your great friend's gentle biddings; and when he takes out into the country his mules laden with Aetolian nets, and his dogs, up with you and cast aside the glumness of your unsocial Muse, that you may share his supper with a relish, whereof toil has been the price – it is the wonted pastime of the heroes of Rome, is good for fame as well as for life and limb – especially when you are in health, and can outdo either the hound in speed or the boar in strength. Add that there is none who more gracefully handles manly weapons: you know how loudly the ring cheers when you uphold the combats of the Campus. In fine, while a mere youth, you served in a hard campaign, and in the Cantabrian wars, under a captain who even now is taking down our standards from the Parthian temples and, if aught is still beyond our sway, is assigning it to the arms of Italy. Further, that you may not draw back and stand aloof without excuse, bear in mind that, however much you take care to do nothing out of time and tune, you do sometimes amuse yourself at your father's country-seat: your troops divide the skiffs; with you as captain, the Actian fight is presented by your slaves in true foemen's style; opposing you is your brother, the lake is the Adriatic; till winged Victory crowns with leafage one or the other chieftain. He who believes that you fall in with his pursuits will with both thumbs eagerly commend your sport.

Here, in reference to leisure pursuits in the country, the imagery and the language refer to Horace's depiction of Scipio and Laelius, whose playful *rusticatio* had also been evoked by Cicero.[33] But here there is something profoundly different from the free leisure of the Roman elders. The pursuit engaged in by the young noble Lollius on his father's estate is the reconstruction of the Battle of Actium, in which the clash between the two

[33] Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.71–4; Cic. *De or.* 2.22. The passages are cited in Mayer 1994, ad loc.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

opposing forces is played out through to the final result. This game receives the approval of the eminent figure in whose house Lollius aspires to live (66 *tuum laudabit* ... *ludum*). Although this person's identity remains unspecified, the dominant figure with which the whole context ties in is Augustus.[34] He was the real winner of the battle that the young Roman reproduces as a game; he held sway over an immense space, and his court was by now the model for a powerful man's house.

The battle game, with the final approval of an eminent figure, has a literary precedent. Once again we are taken back to Xenophon, to a work with a strong political value, in that he advances, through the figure of Cyrus, a model of kingship. While the army is camped, Cyrus invites one of his captains and all his men to eat with him as a gesture of appreciation for the sham combat the captain had organised as a *paidia* (we might say: 'as a *ludus*'):

> ἐκάλεσε δ' ἐπὶ δεῖπνον ὁ Κῦρος καὶ ὅλην ποτὲ τάξιν σὺν τῷ ταξιάρχῳ, ἰδὼν αὐτὸν τοὺς μὲν ἡμίσεις τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς τάξεως ἀντιτάξαντα ἑκατέρωθεν εἰς ἐμβολήν, θώρακας μὲν ἀμφοτέρους ἔχοντας καὶ γέρρα ἐν ταῖς ἀριστεραῖς, εἰς δὲ τὰς δεξιὰς νάρθηκας ταχεῖς τοῖς ἡμίσεσιν ἔδωκε, τοὶς δ' ἑτέροις εἶπεν ὅτι βάλλειν δεήσοι ἀναιρουμένους ταῖς βώλοις. (18) ἐπεὶ δὲ παρεσκευασμένοι οὕτως ἔστησαν, ἐσήμηνεν αὐτοῖς μάχεσθαι. ἐνταῦθα δὴ οἱ μὲν ἔβαλλον ταῖς βώλοις καὶ ἔστιν οἳ ἐτύγχανον καὶ θωράκων καὶ γέρρων, οἱ δὲ καὶ μηροῦ καὶ κνημῖδος ... (19) ταῦτα δ' ἀγασθεὶς ὁ Κῦρος, τοῦ μὲν ταξιάρχου τὴν ἐπίνοιαν, τῶν δὲ τὴν πειθώ, ὅτι ἅμα μὲν ἐγυμνάζοντο, ἅμα δὲ ἡὐθυμοῦντο, ἅμα δὲ ἐνίκων οἱ εἰκασθέντες τῇ τῶν Περσῶν ὁπλίσει, τούτοις δὴ ἡσθεὶς ἐκάλεσέ τε ἐπὶ δεῖπνον αὐτοὺς ... (20) τῇ δ' ὑστεραίᾳ μεστὸν ἦν τὸ πεδίον πᾶν τῶν τούτους μιμουμένων· καὶ εἰ μὴ ἄλλο τι σπουδαιότερον πράττοιεν, ταύτῃ τῇ παιδιᾷ ἐχρῶντο. (Xen. *Cyr.* 2.3.17–20)
>
> And once Cyrus invited a captain and his whole company to dinner, because he had noticed him drawing up one half of the men of his company against the other half for a sham battle. Both sides had breastplates and on their left arms their shields; in the hands of the one side he placed stout cudgels, while he told the other side that they would have to pick up clods to throw. (18) Now when they had taken their stand thus equipped, he gave the order to begin battle. Then those on the one side threw their clods, and some struck the breastplates and shields, others also struck the thighs and greaves of their opponents ... (19) In this Cyrus admired both the captain's cleverness and the men's obedience, and he was pleased to see that they were at the same time having their practice and enjoying themselves and

[34] See Bowditch 1994, esp. 418 and 421.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> also because that side was victorious which was armed after the fashion of the Persians. Pleased with this he invited them to dinner ... (20) ... On the following day the whole plain was full of men following their example; and if they had nothing more important to do, they indulged in this sport. (tr. W. Miller)

The *rus paternum* of a Roman noble is extremely far removed from the Persian encampment, and the war game that takes place there is much more sophisticated than the scrap between the Persians. But the element that creates a likeness between these two distant spaces is the self-satisfied approval of the person who observes the game – who in Xenophon is Cyrus, while in the Roman context the ultimate point of reference is Augustus. The proximity between these distant spaces is 'political' in nature. While in the epistle the city is not present as a physical space, the characters and their behaviour refer to it insofar as it is the organised space of coexistence. The *liberrimus* Lollius enjoys himself in the country; but his game has a different meaning to the games of Scipio and Laelius. The approval of the powerful figure, which through resemblance between literary texts repeats the approval of the exemplary king represented by Cyrus, is almost a symbol of the fact that the city of Rome (the city as polis, as an entity characterised by social relations, institutions, modes of government) had changed profoundly.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009176064.003 Published online by Cambridge University Press