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The Authorial Subject as a Metapoetic Figure in Ode I 9, *Vides ut alta,* and Ode II 19, *Bacchum in remotis*

ABSTRACT: This paper analyses the relation between the authorial and textual subject of Ode I 9, *Vides ut alta,* and Ode II 19, *Bacchum in remotis*, as a means of transition from a figurative represented world to an author's experience of the creative process, understood as Horace's attempt to capture the creator's natural need to transform this key experience into an act of poetic communication. As a starting point for analysis, the construction of the subject-bard (*vates*) and the topics of poetic frenzy (*ingenium*, *insania*, *mania*) shaping the poet's image as a medium between the divine sphere of inspiration and the poetic communication turned towards the sender were adopted.

KEYWORDS: Horace, Carmina, *Vides ut alta*, *Bacchum in remotis*, *Carm.* I 9, *Carm.* II 19, metapoetry, *vates*, *ingenium*, *insania*, *mania*, authorial subject, pragmatics

In considering theoretical and critical literary themes in the works of Quintus Horatius Flaccus, attention is drawn to the division that occurs between hexametric poetry – satires and letters – and polymetric poetry – epodes and odes. Fundamental to the distinction between

these two types of activity is the subject of construction.[1] The issue can be simplified to the distinction between *logos* and *mythos*. Both Plato (*Phd*. 61b) and Aristotle saw the role of the poet as the narrator of a story (storytelling). The Stagirite emphasized that – according to the modes of imitation, story and action—an author speaking in his own name rather than under the form of created characters is not a poet but a philosopher (*Poet*. 1447b, 1460a). Naturally, it is impossible to draw such a definitive line in Horace's work. Nevertheless, in the "hexameter essays", as Kenneth Quinn calls the *Satires* and *Letters*,[2] Horace created the mask of the critic and philosopher – the figure of "not being a creator," which allowed him to temporarily step out of the poet's role.[3] This was fundamental in texts dealing with poetics:

> *Ergo fungar uice cotis, acutum*
> *reddere quae ferrum ualet exsors ipsa secandi;*
> *munus et officium, nil scribens ipse, docebo,*
> *unde parentur opes, quid alat formetque poetam,*
> *quid deceat, quid non, quo uirtus, quo ferat error.*
> (Hor. *Ars Poetica,* 304–307)

A similar construction does not function in the *Carmina*, as their central figure is *vates – Musarum sacerdos*, the authorial construction that binds together all the elements of the poetic world and is thus inseparable from it. Therefore, the basic issue, assuming that Horace does not abandon his theoretical interests even in his odes, will be to identify the elements of the strategy of "speaking in his own name," the

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[1]   Studies of Horace's works respect the genre division, discussing hexameter poetry and lyric poetry separately; see Harrison 2007; Davis 2010; Günther 2013. The term "authorial subject" mentioned in the title comes from the field of pragmatic poetics and is used to define the relationship between the textual subject (constituting a figure within the presented world, realized as the voice of "I", *ego loquens*, or the polyphony of masks, roles and other characters' voices) and the authorial subject, implying the existence of an extratextual author, and what is more important, an extratextual point of reference. Kasperski 1977: 62–75. Cf. term "implied author" (Schmid 2013).

[2]   Quinn 1979: 194–198.

[3]   Kopek 2022: 8–17.

poet's introduction of theoretical and critical elements into poetry, and thus the construction of the metalevel of the text.

Treating a text of this type as a "semantically two-level object,"[4] it is possible to try to identify such a figure that allows the poet to capture the nature of the creative process without breaking the poetic illusion of the organic nature of the created world. The signal should be clear enough to provide the reader with an indication that the text has been supplemented with metatext. However, in this case it is not possible to speak of a strictly semiotic term – a sign, which in itself is supposed to be transparent.[5] In a metapoetic work such an element must play a dual role – as a part of the presented world and a transition beyond this world.

Thus, it can be asked, what is the function of such a complex figure? The answer may lie in the "mysterious" language of *Carmina* and the specific communicative situation that occurs between the text and its audience. The author made it clear that his works were not aimed at everyone (Hor. *Sat*. I 10, 72–89), which does not mean that they would be inaccessible to a wide audience once published. However, the text could conceal "secret" content in the form of a poetic cipher, understandable only to erudite people rooted in the intellectualized culture of the time.[6]

A good example of such a strategy is Ode III 1 of *Odi profanum volgus*, interpreted by Eduard Fraenkel in terms of the usage of language from the sacred sphere to realize political themes.[7] Such an approach can also be used to analyse reflections on the structure of the aesthetic situation:

> *Odi profanum volgus et arceo.*
> *Favete linguis: carmina non prius*
> *audita Musarum sacerdos*
> *virginibus puerisque canto.*
> (Hor. *Carm*. III 1, 1–4)

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[4]   Bakuła 1994: 32–34.
[5]   Nöth 1990: 79ff.
[6]   Pavlovskis 1968: 35.
[7]   Fraenkel 1957, 260–265.

Musarum sacerdos marks the division between the crowd of uninitiated profane people and the choir of initiates within the sacred circle with the protagonist in the priest's role, which resembles the structure of Ode I 1:

> *Me doctarum hederae praemia frontium*
> *dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus*
> *Nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori*
> *secernunt populo*
> (Hor. *Carm*. I 1, 29–32)

Carmina non prius audita delineate *novum* – the secret that the priest will entrust to the initiates. The Horatian division between the priest, the initiates and the profane forms the basis for the formulation of the metapoetic figure as one of the elements of his lyric. For the most important point of distinction is the separate code by which the initiates communicate, or *carmen*, a term rooted in sacred language.[8] Such a code refers to the secret knowledge they possess – the result of initiation. The priest is both the guardian of this knowledge and its teacher, so his words simultaneously seek to conceal and reveal the mystery of divine frenzy and inspiration, depending on the type of recipient. Thus, the basic content of the text, the world presented and *aptum* in terms of *docere*, realized whether through *delectare* or *movere*, is intended for everyone, while the secret of creative process, the moment of mastery by the deity and the transition from the idea of song to its "shadow" or "echo" in the shadow world is reserved for the initiated. In this sense, the question can be linked to the concept of *episteme* as a form of knowledge based on the cognition of causes rather than merely focused on effects (Arist. *Ethica Nic*. 1139a5–15, 1139a25–30, 1139b15–30, 1140a1–20, *Metaph*. 981a5–10, 981b1–10).[9] Metatext is a form that fulfils this function, because within it two levels of communication coexist, involving two messages aimed at two audiences. The text is subject to a wider audience, the metatext to a narrower one.

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[8]   Hahn 2007, 235–236.
[9]   Cf. Pakaluk 2005: 206–232; Reeve 2006: 202–204; Vasiliou 2011: 170–190.

Thus, insofar as the *carmen* is a message directed from the poet-priest to the chorus and a further audience, this opens the texts to interpretation in reference to the compositional technique of drama and choral lyric. However, it is not a question of exploring intertextual connections with Greek choral lyric, which has already been subjected to multidimensional analysis,[10] but of analysing the relationship between the protagonist and *didaskalos* – lyrical subject and a subject of creative actions.

Carmen **I 9,** *Vides ut alta*

For Horace's *chorea,* immersed in the semiliterate/semi-oral culture[11] of lyric poetry, is not a viable performance technique (*Carmen saeculare* may be an exception), but an intertextual sign within the text. That the *chorea* in the ode is in fact a synecdoche and can be evidenced by the *carmen* I 9 *Vides ut alta*. In a work based on the Epicurean principle of *carpe diem,* the subject asks Taliarchus, endowed with a speaking name, meaning symposiarch,[12] to measure wine and not think about tomorrow (*Carm*. I 9, 12–23). Horace, beginning with a picture of ice-covered nature, moves on to a description of the cosy interior and the four-year-old Sabine (*quadrimum merum*), which dissipates worries. At the same time, the subject advises the young Taliarchus not to think about tomorrow but to leave worries to the gods, to take advantage of what fate brings (*Fors*) and to enjoy his youth. The overarching compositional scheme evidently refers to the master-disciple relationship. However, it was made more attractive by contrasting it with comedic characters: a young man and a gruff old man[13]:

> *Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quaerere, et*
> *quem fors dierum cumque dabit, lucro*
> *adpone nec dulcis amores*

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[10] Cf. Putnam 2002: 1–6.

[11] Cf. Lyne 2005: 542–558; Woolf 2009: 46–68; Dupont 2009: 143–163; Farrell 2009: 164–185.

[12] Shorey 1900: 171; Nisbet, Hubbard 1970: 121.

[13] Skwara 2005: 309.

sperne, puer, neque tu choreas,
donec virenti canities abest
morosa.
(Hor. *Carm*. I 9, 13–18)

The motifs placed after the word *choreas* are too reminiscent of a comedy scheme to be random. Already lines 18–19 bring up the fundamental conflict of youth – old age: *donec virenti canities abest morosa*. After such an introduction Horace introduces the comedy scene directly:

Nunc et Campus et areae
lenesque sub noctem susurri
composita repetantur hora,
nunc et latentis proditor intumo
gratus puellae risus ab angulo
pignusque dereptum lacertis
aut digito male pertinaci.
(Hor. *Carm*. I 9, 18–24)

A temporal perspective of the text is interesting.[14] The first part, spoken by the mentor, is constructed in the imperative mode of the present tense (v. 1 *vides*, v. 5 *dissolve*, v. 10 *permitte*, v. 14 *fuge*, v. 16 *adpone*, v. 17 *sperne*), which strongly emphasizes the connection to the present. Temporal perspective changes in line 18, with the introduction of *donec,* which limits not only Taliarchus's youth but sets a boundary beyond which the mask of the young man will be replaced by that of the old man. This moment is colourfully related to the first stanza – grey hair whitened the old man's head just as snow whitens the top of a mountain; the green of youth, like spring, contrasts with winter, life with death. Significant in this context, the *nunc* (v. 19 and 22) changes the time of "action" once again. In this respect it is worth looking at the last "scene" of the *carmen*. It begins by showing the setting – it is an urban space, public squares, porticoes and dark corners. It is evening, the appointed hour of the meeting. The motif is constructed on the

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[14] Cf. Lowrie 1997: 49ff.; O'Gorman 2002: 81–101; Damon 2002: 103–120.

basis of contrast between the rural space, dynamic thanks to nature but with static human figures, and the urban space, where dynamic erotic scenes play out within static dark architecture. The subject in relation to nature, the dynamics of which seem to be independent of him, seemingly, externally takes the attitude of a passive observer, but in fact the mentioned dynamics represents his inner self (reflection on nature becomes self-reflection). However, in urban space, architecture is a dead and silent witness of human activities. It cannot reflect the dynamics of the characters themselves, but as a background and a kind of commentary on the committed act it contains them within itself. It represents the static space of stage with a stationary set among which the actors move. Therefore, a type of chiasmus is constituted in which nature, acting on its own, corresponds to the actors and the subject corresponds to the scene.

The moment of transition between these spaces is marked by *donec* and *nunc*, which is a boundary between the time of monologue/dialogue of the ode and the time of "scene." It should be noted that, while the subject's conversation-monologue with Taliarchus takes place in the real time of the depicted world, the schematic scene of tryst takes place only in the subject's story, and therefore in a time and space different from the time and space of the textual events. "The scene" is one of the "conceived plot," but it is not mythological time. It can be compared to the relationship between the stage action and the *rhesis angelike*, the speech of messenger – one who has lived and/or experienced, so he speaks from autopsy. In this way the subject connects a given fact with the temporal distance that is necessary for reflection, forming an experience, functioning alongside experiencing.[15] Moreover, it is in this form of storytelling that the characters of the play learn about the perpetration of *stuprum*, represented in the stage action through an artefact serving *anagnorisis*.[16]

At the same time it should be noted that the technique of comedy-type construction also has a second dimension, as it is part of the technique of subject construction. On the one hand the subject appears as

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[15] Cf. Łukaszuk 2015: 118–134.

[16] Skwara 2008: 63–72; Duckworth 1994: 28, 37, 281, 291–292; Fantham 2011: 115–143.

one who has experience and views the life of young Taliarchus through its prism. On the other hand he clearly distances himself from the *canities morosa*. He does not care for comedic didacticism – he does not want to play the role of a stern old man. Moreover, he situates himself outside the plot, in the role of a "director," a *didaskalos*, who consciously circulates among literary types, referring to the common imagination of the audience, formed through the medium of theatre. Thus, Horace, on the margins of the philosophical theme, shows how the character of Taliarchus, "real" in the world of the play, is transformed in the imagination of the subject, and thus in the space of the next level, into a literary type by superimposing what for the lyrical subject is a memory and for the audience a reference to a comic motif.

Thus, Horace, as it seems, tries to capture that moment when "reality" in the mind of the poet-subject is transformed into "literariness," that which is concrete and experienced, into that which is general and shared with the viewer. To put it another way, the process of inductive transformation of the experienced concrete into a general type of literary character which will encompass and unify in one work a series of sufficiently similar experiences. Thus, the subject functions simultaneously in two spaces – in the "reality" of the depicted world, as its participant, the old man instructing the young man, and in his own imagination, as the creator of a "conceived" scene—being an element connecting the two spaces himself.

The allusion to theatre allows this phenomenon to be highlighted through the shared experience of perceiving the depicted world on multiple levels with the audience; through the immediacy of stage action, the spatio-temporal distinctiveness of *rhesis angelike* and the status of *didaskalos*. In this way, in fact, the distance and relationship between the author or subject of creative activities and his creation can be put into the inner sphere of the same work.

Figuratively speaking, it is not the figure of a masked man putting on successive masks, but the figure of an *artifex-didaskalos*, incarnating in successive masks. The theatricalisation of the depicted world allows the poet, functioning in a semi-scriptural culture, to introduce an understanding between the one behind the characters and the viewer. This sweeps away the absence of the aoid-reciter, who represented

himself outside the narrative and makes the figure of the creator present, creating a communicative situation, despite the absence of the performer, thanks to the achieved transparency of the figure of the lyrical subject, referring to something outside himself, i.e., to the creative process. The lyric subject of the text does not become identical with the author but in a limited way can "play" his role, through representation. Subsequently, it is possible to observe the formation of a meta-poetic technique, mainly involving the manipulation of self-creation and the illusion of identification.

The creative dimension of the poet's imagination is reinforced by the motif of *merum* evoked in the text – strong wine undiluted with water, suggesting the presence of Bacchus (cf. *Carm*. I 18) and Bacchic poetic inspiration (cf. *Carm*. III 25). In particular, the second stanza seems to combine the Apollonian and Bacchic elements in two of Taliarchus's gestures – the adding of logs to the fire and the drawing of pure wine:

> *Dissolve frigus ligna super foco*
> *large reponens atque benignius*
> *deprome quadrimum Sabina,*
> *o Thaliarche, merum diota.*
> (Hor. *Carm*. I 9, 5–8)

Apollo was encoded in the motif of the Sorakte mountain, a center of worship of ancient deities still connected with the Etruscans, associated in the classical period, precisely with the son of Leto.[17] Attention is drawn to the fact that the deity was sacrificed with just burned logs. At the same time, the ancients connected the god associated with the Sorakte mountain – Soranus with the Roman deity Dis, the deity of the underworld and death, who also harmonizes within the scope of Apollo's activities, especially in the epics.[18]

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[17] Rissanen 2012: 115–135. Por. Verg. *Aen*. XI 784–788*: concitat et superos Arruns sic voce precatur: / summe deum, sancti custos Soractis Apollo, / quem primi colimus, cui pineus ardor acervo / pascitur, et medium freti pietate per ignem / cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

[18] Rissanen 2012: 117.

The two sacrificial gestures – throwing logs on the fire and pouring pure wine – are linked by the phrase *o Thaliarche*. Robert Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard point out that the exclamation "o" Horace, used in prayers, in their poetic adaptation, or a particular kind of apostrophe, also suggested close intimacy. Thus, it should be emphasized that in the perception of the subject, simple activities take on an almost sacred dimension, and the pleasure of sipping wine in front of a burning fire is accompanied by a solemn mood – Taliarchus becomes a priest, a master of ceremonies. The duality of this image is, as already emphasized, the result of the construction of the subject, who not only perceives more but makes things actually more – it is in his eyes that the one-dimensional activity of throwing on the fire and serving wine becomes representative of the sacrifice. It is as if the poet invokes literary deities before he performs the creative act – with their help. This is a subtle figure, but not alien to Horace's work. It was most clearly realized in the ode *Descende caelo*, in which three main parts can be distinguished: 1. a direct quasi-prayerful turn to Calliope:

Descende caelo et dic age tibia
regina longum Calliope melos,
seu voce nunc mavis acuta
seu fidibus citharave Phoebi.
(Hor. *Carm*. III 4, 1–4)

2. the moment of the appearance of Muse in its proper form of beautiful singing (Gr. Καλλιόπη; beauty-voice), sending inspiration (*amabilis insania)*, accompanied by the experience of the liminality of space, which the subject eventually transcends in the transition from *auditory* impressions (the Muse appears in the "shape" of a song) to non-sensory perceptions (*auditis – ludit insania – videor*), to finally reach the sacred place – the space of the deity's being (*lucus*; *locus amoenus*):

Auditis? An me ludit amabilis
insania? Audire et videor pios
errare per lucos, amoenae
quos et aquae subeunt et aurae.
(Hor. *Carm*. III 4, 5–8)

3. introduction of an actual quasi-mythic story about the poet's special relationship with the Muses and their protection of Augustus' actions, which gives the impression of imitating that song in the form of which Calliope came at the call of the creator (*Carm*. III 4, 9–80). A similar form is taken by ode III 25, in which the poet, kidnapped by Bacchus (under the form of intoxication-frenzy), finds himself in the space of sacred grotto, where it is only in the form of a combination of uncontrolled frenzy with conscious creative endeavours under the poet's total control that the subject announces the creation of the actual work. The common point of these metapoetic figures is the interioration of an external element, perceived in terms of alienation and even threat, an element that is the sphere of transformation, the transition from the moment of "non-creation" to the creative act.[19]

The foreignness of Thaliarchus[20] in the otherwise Italic landscape of the song *Vides ut alta* also draws attention. Moreover, given Horace's stance on the use of neologisms and Grecisms (Hor. *Ars Poetica* 46–49), one must conclude that the use of as many as three Grecisms (Thaliarchus, *diota*, v. 8; *chorea*, v. 16) within a single text looks unusual. The name Thaliarchus may conceal more than just symposiarchus. Paul Shorey, in his commentary on Ode I 9, resolves the speaking name as "master of revelry/drinking" – θαλίας τὸν ἄρχοντα or συμποσίαρχος.[21] The Greek θαλία, meaning "abundance," plural "feast," given the comic motifs discernible in *carmen* I 9, naturally raises an association with the Muse of comedy – Thalia.

Hence the reference can be made to Plutarch, who wrote in the *Symposia* (*Quaes. conv*. XIV 746e–f):

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19   Burkert 1987: 91–114; Mojsik 2011: 242–255. The researcher relied on the model of the rite of passage described as discussed by Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner: 1. separation; the initiate is symbolically stripped of his previous position in the community; 2. the liminal/marginalization phase – the initiate loses his previous status but still does not gain a new one; this is a moment of symbolic exclusion, „death," often involving trauma exposure, experiencing physical or psychological pressure; 3. inclusion – the initiate gains a new place in the community, accompanied by the receipt of a symbolic sign of the ritual performed.
20   Nisbet, Hubbard 1970: 117.
21   Shorey 1900: 171; Nisbet, Hubbard 1970: 121.

To turn to desire, Thalia converts our concern for food and drink from something savage and animal into a social and convivial affair. That is why we apply the word thaliazein (merry-making) to those who enjoy one another's company over wine in a gay and friendly manner, not to those who indulge in drunken insults and violence.[22]

In the context of the textual events of Plutarch's dialogue – the discussion of philosophers at a feast – Thalia's role is precisely that of a symposiarch. As a deity, she moderates the thirst for liquor, allowing for a balance between "drinking together" – *symposium* – and getting drunk (cf. Hor. *Carm*. I 18). Plutarch links Thalia and its influence with the verb θαλιάζω "to enjoy oneself, make merry".[23] The dialogue shows that, according to Plutarch, θαλιάζω was formed secondarily from the name of Muse and means people who, when feasting, are merry and sociable rather than quarrelsome and angry.

Such a concept, associated with *aurea mediocritas* between extremes, fits perfectly with the Horatian *carpe diem*, combining the wine-Bacchus motif with the symposium and its philosophical dimension, putting the subject in a state of poetic creativity, but it also provides a balancing element so as not to lose himself completely in Bacchus' domain.

That Horace may have connected Thalia with comedy may be evidenced by the contextual use of the adjective *argutus* – "singing, talkative, ingenious, sly, crafty, cunning" in Satire I 10:

> *haec ego ludo,*
> *quae neque in aede sonent certantia iudice Tarpa*
> *nec redeant iterum atque iterum spectanda theatris.*
> *arguta meretrice potes Davoque Chremeta*
> *eludente senem comis garrire libellos*
> *unus vivorum, Fundani*
> (Hor. *Sat*. I 10, 38–42)

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[22]   Warmington 1957: 286–287. Plutarch is admittedly a much later author, but in the *Symposium* he refers to earlier philosophers, especially Plato and his concept of the Muses. Thus, he largely refers to earlier views and responds to them.

[23]   Liddell, Scott 1883: 660.

Passus directly refers to the new comedy and the only representative of genre in Horace's time – *Fundanius*, and the adjective *argutus* itself will appear to describe precisely Thalia in Ode IV 6: *Doctor argutae fidicen Thaliae, Phoebe* (v. 25). Moreover, the very context of the same poem refers to *chorea*.

The subject of Ode I 9 seems to concentrate the effects of divine presence, i.e., inspiration, but also retains full power over himself without falling into the frenzy, as perceived by Democritus, Horace satirically wrote about in *De arte poetica* (v. 295–304), which seems all the more important, as in Ode IV 6 Apollo himself is shown as a *doctor fidicen*, combining knowledge and skill. Both aspects correspond to Horace's ways of showing the function of the subject of creative activities – *vates* (*Romanae fidicen lyre*, *Carm.* IV 3, 23; *Latinus fidicen*, *Epist.* I 19, 33). Participating in both worlds, the subject transforms the metaphysical experience into the concrete of a poetic work (materializing additionally in the form of *liber*). This ability Horace seems to gradually expand and transform into a figure of "not being a creator" when he becomes a theorist of art and ultimately its teacher. He expresses this especially in *De arte poetica*, in the metaphor of a whetstone that does not cut but sharpens (v. 304–308), and in the analogy between the poet and the flute player and athlete, who, before they can win the Olympic laurel need an instructor, a coach (v. 410–415). The subject of Ode I 9 thus shifts from the function of a teacher of the philosophy of life to that of a teacher of the role of a young man in a comic scene, from philosopher to *didaskalos*. This transition is all the more natural because, as the cited Plato and Aristotle put it, it is natural for a poet to capture moral teaching in an imitative form operating with literary types.

Once again, this is achieved by transforming Taliarchus from an addressee of the teachings of the philosophy of life into a priest of the cult of Apollo and Bacchus, and ultimately into a young man of Greek descent in the *fabula palliata*. The center of this transformation is the subject, who creates the figure again and again. And at the same time, the figures into which the subject embodies Taliarchus are united by the principle of imitation – as Taliarchus throwing wood on the fire and pouring wine reminds the subject of a priest, through the symbolic

nature of the actions performed; similarly, Taliarchus as still a boy: *nec dulcis amores* / *sperne, puer* (*Carm.* I 9, 15–16) will be associated with the figure of a young man at the moment of *stuprum*, i.e., the act of initiation. In both cases there is no identification but a literary form of representation of what is external to the subject in his inner sphere – imagination, the space of creation. Horace demonstrates this process through reference to *chorea* and theatrical allusion in the text's composition.

Carmen IV 6 *Dive, quem proles*

The work that most clearly demonstrates the Horatian strategy of incorporating the creative process into the creation is Ode IV 6 *Dive, quem proles*. It ties together the most important methods that construct the Horatian subject: the motif of transition, the motif of inspiration as a divine gift, the question of illusion of the work performance and its breaking, which introduces the representation of the poet-*didaskalos* in relation to a chorus. All of this welds together in the concept of an authorial subject-bard – *vates Horatius*, who directly breaks the lyrical illusion and instructs the choir.

The pretext for showing the creator at work became a technical error by one of the choristers, which introduces the division of the ode into: a hymn in honour of Apollo (v. 1–24) and an outburst of anger by the *didaskalos*, a perfectionist who cannot afford any error in the ritual performance of the work (v. 25–44),[24] ending with the author's *sphragis* – two connected texts that are clearly separated by the collectivity of the chorus and the individual "I" of the subject figure.

However, the method used by Horace is much more complex than the form of "a scene from a choir rehearsal". Already E. Fraenkel rejected the connection between the text of ode and the actual event – the choir rehearsal, which is led by the author himself, which shows the dance steps and conducts. The researcher focuses particularly on

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[24] One cannot help to appreciate the irony that *vates Horatius* falls victim to the curse of Horace the satirist: *Demetri, teque, Tigelli,* / *discipularum inter iubeo plorare cathedras* (Sat. I 10, 90–91).

the phrase: *Lesbium servate pedem meique pollicis ictum* (v. 35–36), cautioning against understanding it too literally as a bar finger-picked by *chorodidaskalos*, a phrase that signifies the specific lyrical meter employed by the poet.[25] Nor does it appear that the reference in the last lines of the ode to the celebration of *ludi saeculares* introduces, despite the metrical identity, a direct reference to the performance of *Carmen saeculare*. Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that the organic nature of the ode is realized in its internal coherence and sufficiency of all parts of the work – thus both the hymn to Apollo, which represents the work proper, and the moment when the stage illusion is broken by the nervous *didaskalos*:

> *Doctor argutae fidicen Thaliae,*
> *Phoebe, qui Xantho lavis amne crinis,*
> *Dauniae defende decus Camenae,*
> *levis Agyieu.*
> (Hor. *Carm.* IV 6, 25–28)

Leaving aside the relationship between the invoked ode and Pindar's paean 6, with which the text is sometimes contrasted,[26] it is necessary to focus attention only on the constituted function of the poet-mediator, whose place between the deity and the collective (in this case the choir) is inherent in the Horatian construction of the subject:

> *Spiritum Phoebus mihi, Phoebus artem*
> *carminis nomenque dedit poetae.*
> *Virginum primae puerique claris*
> *patribus orti,*
>
> *Deliae tutela deae, fugacis*
> *lyncas et ceruos cohibentis arcu,*
> *Lesbium servate pedem meique*
> *pollicis ictum,*

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[25] Fraenkel 1957: 400–407.
[26] Foster 2016: 149–165.

rite Latonae puerum canentes,
rite crescentem face Noctilucam,
prosperam frugum celeremque pronos
voluere mensis.
(Hor. *Carm*. IV 6, 29–40)

The construction is based on a *chiastic* parallel between, on the one hand, *Thalia* and the choir, with one of the choristers singled out and the others, *Phoebus* and *vates Horatius*, who calls on god for help in defending the dignity of the Daunian Muse, clearly threatened by choir incompetence: muse being a metonymic term for his own art, in particular the hymn he was working on, as imitation of perfect song that exists in the realm of Apollo (v. 25–28 and 41–44). In relation to the choir, *vates* plays the role that Apollo plays in relation to Thalia (v. 25–26: *Doctor argutae fidicen Thaliae, Phoebe*; v. 43–44: *reddidi carmen docilis modorum vatis Horati*), but at the same time the figure itself operates as a transition from the realm of inspiration to the ode and beyond to the act of its performance, which must be perfect for this very reason (v. 29–40). Paradoxically, this process is made visible by the pretext of a technical error during the said act.

With that there is no need to relate the lyrical situation to any actual event, the choir rehearsal preceding performance at the *ludi saeculares*. As *didaskalos*, the subject becomes the priest of Apollo, the girls and boys his followers, initiated into the mysteries. Thus, the first part of the ode (v. 1–24) becomes the content, the second a reference to the ritual formula. The quasi-religious dimension of such a construction requires the condition of ritual perfection, adequate to its content. After all, only the correct invocation and celebration of the deity will produce the desired effect in the form of his favour, i.e., a perfect work. At the same time, it is precisely the quasi-religious construction, through the motif of Apollo – the teacher of the Muse and, parallel, the subject-*didaskalos* – the teacher of the chorus, that indicates the relationship between the text and its performance, including in it the (default) recipient for whom the performance is prepared.

Such a construction gives the Horatian subject the opportunity to transcend the presented world. Therefore, the subject of Ode IV 6 functions

simultaneously during the song, during the breaking of illusion – in the "present," to which he is momentarily summoned by a technical issue of the performance of the text, and in the "future," as he is almost immediately carried away by a new vision. The admonition, addressed to the chorus, becomes a prophecy in which *spiritus Phoebi* is revealed as a vision of the life of one of the girls the subject sees in the future, as she boasts that she once sang with the bard Horace as the world moved into a new age. Of course, in the simplest sense, the last quote can be understood as a manifestation of the confidence of a self-conscious creator. But even then the significance of the chorus' encounter with the mystery focused on the *didaskalos* is revealed. This chorister does not understand it, but out of all the rehearsals, not only those in which she herself has participated, but in general all those that have taken place so far, it is this one that will become unique. However, Horace does not introduce an identifying name, as the chorister is still only a figure, representing the mystery of initiation and immortalization.

What seems to irritate *didaskalos* the most in this scene is precisely the ignorance of the choir, for whom this is merely a performance of a song. By contrast, *vates Horatius* seems to view the scene as a mystical encounter. Ode IV 9, entwined with the theme of poetic immortality and the immortalizing power of poetry, provides an interesting context in this regard. In addition to the question of the creator gaining eternal glory, Horace points out that the poet plays a key role in shaping memory and immortalizing characters. After all, not once did events similar to the Trojan myths play out, not one in which Helen brought doom to more than one stronghold, but all this fell into oblivion without the poet:

> *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*
> *multi; sed omnes inlacrimabiles*
> *urgentur ignotique longa*
> *nocte, carent quia vate sacro.*
> (Hor. *Carm*. IV 9, 25–28)

Therefore, for the subject there is little difference between the past, even the ancient past, present and future. His consciousness moves

freely, almost imperceptibly, between different times and spaces, from the construction of a mythological narrative to the prediction of the future. This encounter with the poet, however, is not experienced as an encounter with the unknown by the choristers, who are stuck in the time of performance and do not notice with what ease that the bard's spirit floats into different regions of time.

This does not change the fact that, as well as literary convention, the awareness of the poet as the creator, expressed in meta-poetic reflection, becomes the very fabric of Horace's lyric. And this, in turn, reflects a construction based on the *topos* of an encounter with the unknown, an encounter with a deity. The abduction by Bacchus, the frenzy of bard and the naming of the "poet" by Apollo, take the subject thus constructed outside the realm of the depicted world. He receives not only the experience of the subject of creative activities but also divine knowledge, concerning both the distant past and future. Thanks to the figure of the authorial, transcendent and transcending subject, Horace creates the meta-poetic level of his texts.

Carmen **II 19** *Bacchum in remotis*

Similarly, Ode II 19 was entwined around the motif of *chorea*, albeit perceived slightly differently:

> *Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus*
> *vidi docentem, credite posteri,*
> *Nymphasque discentis et auris*
> *capripedum Satyrorum acutas.*
> (Hor. *Carm*. II 19, 1–4)

What is intriguing is that – among the typically Bacchic motifs, i.e., the liminal space of the wilderness; the figures of Bacchus' procession (*komos*), the Nymphs and Satyrs, Thyiades; the tragedy of Pentheus' house; the gigantomachy and the descent into the underworld; the horror of being taken over by frenzy; *thyrsus*, Bacchus' artifact; in a word, everything that appears in Bacchic texts – the first stanza brings

a vision of Bacchus as a teacher, educating the Nymphs and Satyrs, eager to lend an ear.[27] In doing so the deity appears in a dual role, on the one hand as a *chorodidaskalos*, teaching the participants of procession song and dance, and on the other hand, in the eyes of the poet, he becomes a *myst* initiating the other characters. In this process the presence of the poet is puzzling. Commentators R. Nisbet and M. Hubbard give two slightly contradictory positions – they see a visionary aspect in the *vidi* form, while at the same time they place the poet outside the entire scene, in the position of an eavesdropper.[28] Both positions seem unauthorized in this case. Merely eavesdropping or peeking at the mysteries would make the poet a sacrilegious person who reveals the cult's secret in the following verses. And yet the subject clearly indicates that it is right (*fas* as 'permissible by divine law'[29]) for him to be the one to recount the deeds of Bacchus, i.e., as a myst to initiate the subsequent participants – the audience. Moreover, the construction of ode does not quite fit into the visionary aspect, as was the case with Ode III 4 *Descende caelo*, when Calliope appeared in her proper form – the elusive, divine chant. But even then, in the vision, some part of the poet actually transcended reality to be outside the sensory, experiential world.

In the case of the Bacchic procession, being kidnapped by a deity is experienced in a much more real way, and all the more so because the creator has his place in the procession, mingled between the deities and the nymphs and satyrs[30]:

> *Me doctarum hederae praemia frontium*
> *dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus*
> *Nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori*
> *secernunt populo*
> (Hor. *Carm.* I 1, 29–32)

In this procession he follows in the footsteps of the deity and imitates him:

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[27] Nisbet, Hubbard 2001: 318–319.
[28] Nisbet, Hubbard 2001: 318.
[29] Lee 1968: 677.
[30] Cf. Kopek 2021: 64–76.

Dulce periculum est,
o Lenaee, sequi deum
cingentem viridi tempora pampino.
(Hor. *Carm*. III 25, 18–20)

It is, of course, a special space, the *locus secretus*, but it largely resembles the space of the Pronomos vase, where the participants in satyr drama, the gods (Dionysus, Ariadne, the heroes) and ordinary Athenians, mixed with each other, were "gathered," among whom were the musician – the aulist Pronomos; a certain Demetrios, the poet (*satyrographos*), Charinos, the lute player, and others bearing more or less popular Greek names – identified as actors holding the masks of their characters or already playing the role of members of the chorus of satyrs,[31] and thus depicted not so much at the moment of technical preparation but at the moment of transformation, the transition from reality to the space of the *locus secretus*, to the actual experience of the Bacchic procession.

Situated in such a context, the ode gives an impression of attempting to frame the experience of receiving drama as a work of art (with all the weight of poetic issues) and as a ritual that allows one to touch and even move into the space of action in full-stage illusion. The veracity of such an experience cannot be denied:

Aut agitur res in scaenis aut acta refertur.
Segnius inritant animos demissa per aurem
quam quae sunt oculis subiecta fidelibus et quae
ipse sibi tradit spectator
(Hor. *Ars Poetica* 179–182)

From the beginning, the text of Ode II 19 is separated into two planes: textual events and extratextual events. The latter encompasses the sphere of mythical story in which the subject participates directly as a member of the Bacchic procession, while the former is the sphere in which the theatrical symbolicity of the story is revealed, i.e., the sphere of the actor and the mask. Related to this division is the temporal

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[31] Robertson 1996: 255–264; Landels 2000: 22, 66; Osborne 2010: 149–158.

perspective – the time of mythic story, the time of the storytelling subject and the time of addressee – the elusive past of mythic time, the present of subject and the future of addressee (*credite posteri*, v. 2). This perspective is already a familiar construct – the poet finds himself between what is divine, mythological, fantastic and what is ordinary and real, and even sceptical of poetic storytelling.[32] However, in this case he does not so much divide as bring the two spheres closer, acting not as a priest who separates the ritual space from the uninitiated, but as a *myst* who invites participation and announces the content of his story (v. 9–16) before moving on to the dithyramb (v. 17–32). Communication with the audience takes place alongside the announced plot, which resembles the technique of a dramatic, especially comedic, turn to the audience, but not exactly in the form of a momentary break of the stage illusion, but rather the construction of a prologue, which is an exposition of the plot (cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 1–8). At this point the subject legitimizes himself to the audience as *myst*, who does not reveal the secrets of the mystery but offers initiation in the phrases *fas… est mihi… cantare… atque… iterare… fas et* (v. 9–13).

Thus, the recipient of the ode is faced with a two-stage text: the entire work is divided into a prologue and a dithyramb proper. At the same time, the breaking of illusion covers only lines 1–16. Between the subject-member of the Bacchic procession and the subject-*myst* there is a relationship of identity with a temporal and spatial shift. It can be compared to identity with a stage character, referring the audience to events that could not be shown directly on stage. This shift between the subject experiencing directly and the subject sharing his experience is extremely important for establishing levels of probability within the text, for the two spaces operate on slightly different laws. The relationship between the sender, the grammatical subject *vidi* (v. 2), addressing the audience – *posteri* (v. 2), is real within the depicted world. It creates an ordinary communicative situation. Nevertheless, this subject, the sender, is forced to ask the audience to believe his words: *credite posteri*. The apostrophe in the imperative mode introduces a sign that the content of the message refers to another level of truthfulness. This measure introduces a story about an event, referring to another semantic

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[32] Nisbet, Hubbard 2001: 318.

level. In a word, within the depicted world it creates another internal reality. Speaking of trust, the referent subject indicates that there may be doubt about truthfulness and probability as he constructs fantasy-mythological events.

It is precisely this duplicity that precludes the inclusion of Ode II 19 entirely in terms of a dithyramb, as a song with a quasi-hymnic dimension. Nevertheless, it is the subject-*myst*, at the level of textual events in the course of communication with the audience, which experiences a Bacchic frenzy:

> *Euhoe, recenti mens trepidat metu*
> *plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum*
> *laetatur. Euhoe, parce Liber,*
> *parce, gravi metuende thyrso.*
> (Hor. *Carm*. II 19, 5–8)

It is only this element that makes it legitimate to transmit the deity to the audience through the experience of meeting the deity-filled subject, in a kind of identification of one with the other – only in this state does the poet rightfully (*fas est*) teach the Bacchic mystery. In this sense, the processuality in the transition from the initiation and experience of the presence of the deity to the actual act of uttering the dithyramb and communicating this experience to the audience is shown.

Analysing this communicative act from the perspective of the sender, it is possible to notice an interesting effect of the process so conceived. This is because the dithyramb becomes, subordinate to the *carmen*, an internal form, a kind of theme of the ode. At the same time, this act of poetic frenzy is enclosed in the precise metre of the Alcaic stanza, which encompasses the entire ode and thus has a superior aspect.

By creating a scene in which the *myst* conveys secret knowledge and at the same time – before the eyes of the audience – undergoes Bacchic frenzy, beginning to speak a "dithyramb" – Horace seems to demonstrate the subject-*myst's* lack of power over his own behaviour and body. He indicates that Bacchus, who taught the subject of his songs, can reveal his presence in any place and time – even through the subject

to reach posterity. In this sense, the text seems to have slipped out of the creator's hands, as what was originally a story about the procession of Bacchus, in quasi-narrative form, unexpectedly becomes an apostrophe praising the deity. What seemed planned as a form of narrative lyric is transformed under the influence of deity into an inspired dithyramb. It should be emphasized that it takes a lyricist with a masterful command of his craft to capture the all-encompassing power of poetic inspiration in such a subtle way. However, leaving aside the issues of poetics, it should be noted that the very motif of mastery by a deity seems to be a reference to the Platonic view of poetry, the view that the poet has no power over the creative process, that mastered by a god he becomes an inert, powerless tool in his hands. A definite difference is Horace's depiction of the subject as a *myst*, initiated and taught the laws of his art by the deity. The poet in this case is not a tool, he is a student. He has the status of a selected and shaped medium between the deity and the uninitiated; he is the one who, paradoxically, expresses *arrheton*.[33]

It should be noted that the poet himself was not very complimentary about artists building their image with regard to superficially understood frenzy (cf. Hor. *Ars Poetica* 295–298), but in the case of Ode II 19 it is – intriguingly – the result of a rational teaching process. Thus, Bacchus himself assumes the attitude of *didaskalos*, and the nymphs, satyrs and the subject-*myst* himself appear as the products of his art, which introduces the issue of *techne* into the song, along with *spiritus*, *ingenium*, *insania*.

The rational aspect of Bacchus-teacher does not naturally reduce the text to a question of the relation of *ars* to *ingenium* – *mania* is still its central theme. Nevertheless, Horace used the layered structure of the text to capture poetic inspiration as a process in which the poet encounters the unknown but still retains his singularity without dissolving into nothingness in the Bacchic procession. In Ode II 19, he is still far from gaining full control over his own creativity. He still resides in the "magnetic chain" that binds into one: deity – poet/reciter – listener (Pl. *Ion* 533d–e). The poet becomes mastered by the deity, inspired, composes the work in a creative frenzy, the reciter (whether identical or not with the poet), performing the work, transmits this divine particle to the recipient and

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[33]   Kerényi 1967: 24–28; Burkert 1987: 69–81.

thus enables indirect contact with the deity and even mastery by the deity (cf. Pl. *Rev.* 22c; *Ion* 533d–e, 534c; *Menex.* 99c–e; *Phd.* 245a; *Symp.* 209a–d). The new relationship Horace proposes between *docere* and *discere* creates a pattern of relationship between teacher (*kritikos*) and student (poet). When, possessed by divine frenzy, the Platonic hero – Socrates – withdraws,[34] and the Horatian subject allows himself to experience frenzy and then transforms it into an aesthetic experience, subject to conventionalization, typification or other artistic processes. *Ars* becomes a tool for rationalizing frenzy.

With the lyrical distance thus constructed, Horace incorporates dithyrambic, divine frenzy as one of lyrical constituents. The Platonic chain becomes a kind of starting point for the Horatian subject – both in terms of literature conception and the establishment of an autonomous model of creativity and the subject in such a way as to achieve their individuality and uniqueness – ultimately focusing on the figure of *vates Horatius*, the one who becomes a mediator (priest and *myst*) between the deity and the uninitiated, aware of his role and prepared to fulfil it. The Horatian chain of magnetic connections runs not through the poet but from the deity to the poet, where *arrheton* is transformed into poetry and then from the poet to the uninitiated.

Edward Kasperski, with regard to the focus of pragmatic poetics, defines the "authorial subject" as "what is expressed" by the textual entity, which is a means of expression in the designatum – sign relationship (1977: 65–67). He further added: "A textual subject is a sign of the 'authorial self' when it is an expression of the significant work of a specific author. When it is the result of working through existing and completed objects, transforming them to suit the needs from which expression is born" (70). Therefore, it would be more correct to point out that the relationship in question consists of three elements: the *designatum*, the sign as well as their subject and creator. What is expressed is the experience and knowledge of the authorial subject (*designatum = episteme*), which takes the form of a textual subject and even occupies the entire space of the presented world (sign). That being the case, the representative function of the textual "I" and the polyphony

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[34]   From what is intuitive and unconscious towards dialectic (*Phd*. 234d, 237a, 238c–d, 241e, 245a–246a and 265c–266b, 270b, 276e). Griswold 1996: 151–156.

of characters and figures that allow the author to bring out reflection on the concept of creativity can be considered a synecdoche, reflecting the author's stance on the literary *topoi* regarding the technique of creating the figure of the "I – the poet!" However, episteme can be evoked in the text through artistic figures but cannot be achieved by "beings" of the presented world; hence, its existence can only be indicated by representation, an element of creating the image of the *vates*. This external, or as defined in the article meta-, relation is necessary to introduce a didactic feature as a nonaesthetic purpose of the work, namely to capture reflection on the actual creative experience (not in the act of writing a given poem but as an essential and "everyday" aspect of being a creator), which in turn constitutes the basis of "self-knowledge" and creative awareness – *episteme* – the authority with which the authorial subject legitimizes himself as a literary theorist. This stance, which on the one hand is a form of self-creation in the *Carmina*, a path towards the canon of the bards, and on the other hand seems to be the seed of the Horatian concept of a teacher of poetry, which we know first from the *Satires* and then from the *Letters*.

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