



HORACE AND VIRGIL ON A FEW ACRES LEFT BEHIND (*CARMINA* 2.15 AND 3.16, AND *GEORGICS* 4.125–48)*

ABSTRACT

This article proposes and interprets a previously undiscussed connection between Horace's Carmen 2.15 and the description of the Corycian gardener at Virgil's Georgics 4.125–48. It argues that this allusion to Virgil sharpens the moral pessimism of Horace's ode. It first considers the circumstantial, general and formal elements connecting these two poems; it then considers how the model of the Corycian gardener brings further point and nuance to the moralizing message of Carmen 2.15 and the way in which this allusion is meaningfully echoed at Carmen 3.16.

Keywords: Latin poetry; Horace; *Carmina* (*Odes*); Virgil; *Georgics*; intertextuality

This article proposes that in *Carmen* 2.15 Horace signals an allusive relationship with Virgil's description of the Corycian gardener at *G.* 4.125–48, and that he does so in order to sharpen a morally pessimistic contrast with Virgil's famous vignette. This relationship between 2.15 and the *Georgics* has not been identified previously, but it is both clearly marked and eminently interpretable. The primary markers of this allusion are the phrase *pauca iugera* 'a few acres'¹ and a shared moralizing context describing the productivity of small holdings and the relative contentment of their owners. In the present discussion I shall first outline the circumstantial, general and specific connections between the two poems. I shall then consider how the allusion to Virgil brings further point and nuance to the moralizing message of *Carmen* 2.15 and the way in which this allusion is meaningfully echoed at *Carmen* 3.16. The main focus of my argument pertains to the first ten lines of poem 2.15, which read as follows:

Iam pauca aratro iugera regiae
moles relinquent, undique latius
extenta uisentur Lucrino
 stagna lacu, platanusque caelebs

euincet ulmos; tum uiolaria et
myrtus et omnis copia narium
 spargent oliuetis odorem
 fertilibus domino priori;

tum spissa ramis laurea feruidos
excludet ictus.

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¹ In both cases the word is used in the looser sense, i.e. 'an expanse of farmland, fields, "acres"' (*OLD* s.v. *iugerum* b).

Soon regal structures will leave only a few acres for the plough; on every side pools will be seen extending more broadly than the Lucrine Lake and the bachelor plane will utterly defeat the elm. Then violets and myrtles and every kind of abundance to delight the nose will scatter perfume on olive groves that were productive for their former master; then the bay tree with its thick foliage will shut out the fiery rays of the sun.²

1. EVOKING THE *GEORGICS* IN *CARMEN* 2.15

Even without any specific verbal repetition, Horace's topic may well have put his readers in mind of the *Georgics*. The circulation at Rome in the 20s B.C.E. of a poem whose professed subject was ploughland—*pauca aratro iugera*—was likely to have evoked the *Georgics* for its reader on these grounds alone. Virgil had defined his didactic poem in its *sphragis* by its agricultural content in the phrase *haec super aruorum cultu pecorumque ... | et super arboribus* ('These things ... about [or 'in addition to'] care of fields, cattle and trees', 4.559–60). Ovid had referenced the poem by the single word *fruges*, 'crops', at *Am.* 1.15.25.³ In the 'pre-proem' or prefatory epigram of the *Aeneid* (*Ille ego qui quondam ...*), it was possible to conjure the *Georgics* in the phrase *uicina coegi | ut quamuis auido parerent arua colono, | gratum opus agricolis* ('I compelled the neighbouring fields to serve the husbandman, however grasping: a work welcome to farmers').⁴ Beyond this circumstantial evocation, the direct influence of the *Georgics* upon individual odes within Books 1–3 has been the subject of a number of studies.⁵ Most recently, in Stephen Harrison's edition of *Odes* Book 2, the importance of Virgil's didactic epos to the second book of odes has been placed on new footing, and rated as 'prime' among the near-contemporary Latin poems to which Horace refers in this book.⁶ We can see the influence of the *Georgics* at a number of moments within Book 2. Virgil's image of fields fertilized by the dead of the Civil War at *G.* 1.491–2 is surely reprised at *Hor. Carm.* 2.1.29–31.⁷ The description of conquered races at *G.* 3.30–3 appears to influence Horace's choice at *Carm.*

² The text of Horace is from D.R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), *Q. Horatius Flaccus: opera* (Berlin, 2008). All translations are my own.

³ For the dating of the *Amores*, see J. McKeown, *Ovid: Amores. Volume 1: Text and Prolegomena* (Leeds, 1987), 74–89.

⁴ On which, see R.G. Austin, '*Ille ego qui quondam ...*', *CQ* 18 (1968), 107–15; J. Farrell, 'Virgil's Ovidian career', *MD* 52 (2004), 41–55; B. Kayachev, '*Ille ego qui quondam*: genre, date, and authorship', *Vergilius* 57 (2011), 75–82, who provides an overview of scholarship from 1968–2004 at 75 n. 2. Dates for this prefatory epigram, often dependent upon the reconstruction of its relationship to the prefatory epigram to Ovid's *Amores*, range from near contemporary to the first century C.E.

⁵ For studies of the reception of the *Georgics* in *Odes* Books 1–3, see e.g. B. Fenik, 'Horace's first and sixth Roman Odes and the second *Georgic*', *Hermes* 90 (1962), 72–96; A. Pieri, 'L' *Epodo* 2 di Orazio e le *Georgiche*', *SIFC* 44 (1972), 244–66; T. Oksala, '*Beatus ille – o fortunatos: wie verhalten sich Horazens zweite Epode und Vergils Georgica zueinander?*', *Arctos* 13 (1979), 97–109; R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book I* (Oxford, 1970), xxiv, xlix, 16–18 (on *Carmen* 1.2), 287 (on *Carmen* 1.24); R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book II* (Oxford, 1978), 10 (on *Carmen* 2.1), 95 (on *Carmen* 2.6), 204 (on *Carmen* 2.13), 226 and 230 (on *Carmen* 2.14), 28 (on *Carmen* 2.18); R.G.M. Nisbet and N. Rudd, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book III* (Oxford, 2004), 4–5 (on *Carmen* 3.1), 302 (on *Carmen* 3.25).

⁶ S.J. Harrison, *Horace Odes Book II* (Cambridge, 2017), 14–15.

⁷ Verg. *G.* 1.491–2 *nec fuit indignum superis bis sanguine nostro | Emathiam et latos Haemi pinguescere campos*; cf. *Hor. Carm.* 2.1.29–31 *quis non Latino sanguine pinguior | campus sepulcris impia proelia | testator*. See R.A.B. Mynors, *Virgil, Georgics* (Oxford, 1990), 95; Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 27; Harrison (n. 6), 56.

2.9.18–24.⁸ The battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs at *G.* 2.455–7 may find reference at *Carm.* 2.12.5–6.⁹ *Georgics* Book 4 more specifically features prominently in *Odes* Book 2. Virgil's account of the myth of Orpheus at *G.* 4.315–557 is recalled at various points throughout the book: in *Carmen* 2.9 the language and the imagery used of Valgius' grief are reprised from Orpheus' lament for Eurydice;¹⁰ at *Carmen* 2.13 Horace's vision of the underworld clearly alludes to the katabasis of Orpheus;¹¹ at *Carmen* 2.19 the pacification of Cerberus replicates details from Virgil's account of Orpheus in the underworld;¹² and at *Carm.* 2.14.7–9 the confining rivers of the underworld seem to look to *G.* 4.478–80.¹³

Finally, the scene of the Corycian gardener itself is foregrounded as a model for *Carm.* 2.6.10–20. David West has argued that *Carmen* 2.6 responds with gentle polemics to a number of aspects of Virgil's description of Tarentum in *Georgics* Book 4.¹⁴ Thus, the etymology of the Galaesus river, from γάλα ('milk'), is alluded to in both passages: via its opposite meaning (κατ' ἀντίφρασιν) in the adjective *niger* ('dark, black') at *G.* 4.126,¹⁵ and positively as a *dulce flumen* ('sweet river') for sheep at *Carm.* 2.6.10–11. The founder of Tarentum is varied from Oebalus in Virgil to Phalanthus in Horace. Most emphatically, the richness and the fertility of the land around Tarentum are stressed by Horace at *Carm.* 2.6.9–20 in contrast to Virgil's emphasis upon the infertility of the *pauca iugera* farmed by the gardener at *G.* 4.128–9 *nec fertilis illa iuuenis | nec pecori opportuna seges nec commoda Baccho* 'not productive for oxen [that is, ploughing], nor appropriate for pasturage, nor suitable for Bacchus'. West summarizes the connections between the two poems neatly:

'... this [*G.* 4.125–9] was the first and unforgettable mention of the Galaesus in surviving Latin literature, and now, half a dozen years later, we have it again [*sc.* in *Carmen* 2.6] in association with old age, honey, the citadel of Tarentum ('citadels' in Horace), and a Spartan king, and in each poem Tarentum is taken as a model of serene life in the country.'¹⁶

⁸ Verg. *G.* 3.30–3 *addam urbes Asiae domitas pulsumque Niphaten | fidentemque fuga Parthum uersisque sagittis; | et duo rapta manu diuerso ex hoste tropaea | bisque triumphatas utroque ab litore gentis*; cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.9.18–24 *potius noua | cantemus Augusti tropaea | Caesaris et rigidum Niphaten | Medumque flumen gentibus additum | uictis minores uoluere uertices | intraque praescriptum Gelonos | exiguis equitare campis*. See Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 137–8; Harrison (n. 6), 118–19, 127.

⁹ Verg. *G.* 2.455–7 *ille furentis | Centauros leto domuit, Rhoecumque Pholumque | et magno Hylaeum Lapithis cratera minantem*; cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.12.5–6 *nec saeuos Lapithas et nimium mero | Hylaeum*. See Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 188; Harrison (n. 6), 147.

¹⁰ Verg. *G.* 4.518 *aruaque Riphaeis numquam uiduata pruinis, 4.466 te ueniente die, te decedente canebat*; cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.9.8–12 *et foliis uiduantur orni: | tu semper urges flebilibus modis | Mysten ademptum, nec tibi Vespero | surgente decedunt amores | nec rapidum fugiente solem*. See Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 136; Harrison (n. 6), 14, 124.

¹¹ Verg. *G.* 4.481–3 *quin ipsae stupere domus atque intima Leti | tartara caeruleosque implexae crinibus angues | Eumenides*; cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.13.33–40 *stupens ... | intorti capillis | Eumenidum ... angues? | quin ...* See Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 219–20, 221; Harrison (n. 6), 14, 156–7, 165.

¹² Verg. *G.* 4.483 *tenuitque inhians tria Cerberus ora*; cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.19.29–32 *te uidit insons Cerberus aureo | cornu decorum leniter atterens | caudam et recedentis trilingui | ore pedes tetigitque crura*. See Harrison (n. 6), 14, 233–5.

¹³ See Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 226, 230; Harrison (n. 6), 14.

¹⁴ D. West, *Horace Odes II: Vatis Amici* (Oxford, 1998), 43–4.

¹⁵ See too J.J. O'Hara, *True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 284, and 66 for remarks on etymologizing κατ' ἀντίφρασιν.

¹⁶ West (n. 14), 43.

In light of the above, readers of the *Odes*, and of the second book in particular, should be alert to potential allusions to the *Georgics*, and to *Georgics* Book 4 more specifically, because Virgil's poem forms such a rich and frequently invoked context for Horace.

Turning to *Carmen* 2.15 itself, the points of linguistic correlation between it and *G.* 4.125–48 are more numerous than have been previously recognized. Two individual items below (points 1 and 5) have been annotated—more or less inertly—in the *Quellenforschung* of Virgil's commentators,¹⁷ but they require further brief elaboration, and to itemize the complete list of markers here will make clear their cumulative effect upon the reader. My aim in what follows is merely to isolate the linguistic vehicles of allusion at work, since I will offer an interpretation of these points of connection in the section following the present one.

1. The opening clause of the poem directs the reader to the *Georgics*.¹⁸ The phrase *iam pauca aratro iugera regiae | moles relinquent* (2.15.1–2) echoes Verg. *G.* 4.127–8, where the Corycian gardener is first defined by the relative clause *cui pauca relictis | iugera ruris erant* 'who owned a few acres of abandoned land'.¹⁹ The prosaic register of the phrase is less important as a marker of allusion than its relative rarity.²⁰ Our present evidence suggests that by the time *Odes* Books 1–3 were published in 23 B.C.E. the collocation had occurred only in our two passages, at Hor. *Carm.* 3.16.29, where *siluaque iugerum | paucorum* 'a woodland of a few acres' is counted among the simple blessings of Horace's Sabine estate (more on this passage below), and at Prop. 3.5.44 *Tityo iugera pauca nouem* 'nine acres are too few for Tityos', where *nouem* is the modifier, *pauca* is used predicatively, and the mythological context is radically different.²¹ Decisive for the allusion is that the combination *paucus* and *iugerum* with *relinquere* is exclusive to both *Carm.* 2.15.1–2 and *G.* 4.127–8, albeit in differing senses of the word: 'leave remaining' in Horace (*OLD* s.v. *relinquo* 13a), 'abandoned' in Virgil (*OLD* s.v. *relictus*¹ 1).
2. In the opening line of Virgil's description, his Corycian *senex* gardens *sub Oebaliae ... turribus arcis* 'under the towers of the Oebalian citadel' (4.125): a learned antonomasia for Tarentum that evokes the early Spartan king, Oebalus.²² Critics understandably cite Horace's own learned periphrasis for Tarentum at

¹⁷ To borrow a phrase from P.A. Miller's review of S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998), in *CPh* 94 (1999), 351–5, at 351. Such correlations as have been previously noted (points 1 and 5: see notes 19 and 25 below) have not appeared in editions of Horace, with the effect that no consideration has been given to the way in which the allusion shapes our understanding of Horace's poetry.

¹⁸ Cf. J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry: Figures of Allusion* (Oxford, 1996), 24 on the opening line as a place already marked as a locus of allusion. Although Horace's first line does not allude to the first line of Virgil's scene (whether we claim *G.* 4.116 or 4.125 as its beginning), the phrase in Virgil is the first descriptive detail of the farm itself.

¹⁹ Noted by R.F. Thomas, *Virgil Georgics*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1988), 2.171: 'Horace speaks critically of the encroachment of civilized man on the land at *Odes* 2.15.1–2.'

²⁰ Cf. Wills (n. 18), 17: 'allusive language is not rarefied *per se*; it is merely distanced from other poetic language, and isolable for that reason. In fact, the use of so-called ordinary and unmarked language (colloquialisms, poetic constructions) may tie two poetic passages together.'

²¹ On the date of *Odes* Books 1–3, see e.g. G.O. Hutchinson, 'The publication and individuality of Horace's *Odes* Books 1–3', *CQ* 52 (2002), 517–37; Nisbet and Rudd (n. 5 [2004]), xix–xx. Data on word frequency and collocation is drawn from the PHI texts database at <https://latin.packhum.org>.

²² On whom see e.g. M. Erren, *P. Vergilius Maro Georgica Band 2 Kommentar* (Heidelberg, 2003), 831; N. Horsfall, *Virgil, Aeneid 7. A Commentary* (Leiden, 2000), 478 on Verg. *Aen.* 7.733–43.

- Carm.* 2.6.11–12 *regnata ... Laconi | rura Phalantho* ('land ruled by Spartan Phalanthus'),²³ but *Carmen* 2.15 also looks to these lines. Horace likewise presents his *pauca iugera* as encroached upon by *regiae moles*, literally 'massive structures worthy of a king' (*OLD* s.v. *regius* 6). Horace's *regiae moles* also recall Virgil's statement at *G.* 4.132—namely, that his gardener 'used to equal the wealth of kings in his happiness' (*regum aequabat opes animis*).
3. Horace's *uisentur*—in context an indication of the viewer's awed wonder²⁴—may be seen to replicate Virgil's insistence upon autopsy at the beginning of his passage: cf. *G.* 4.125–7 *memini me ... | Corycium uidisse senem* 'I recall that I saw an old Corycian man'.
 4. At *Carm.* 2.15.4–5 attention turns to the planting of trees: *platanusque caelebs | euincet ulmos*. Horace's two named trees are the first and last items in Virgil's list of trees planted by the Corycian *senex* at *G.* 4.144–6, the finale of the passage: *ille etiam seras in uersum distulit ulmos | eduramque pirum et spinos iam pruna ferentis | iamque ministrantem platanum potantibus umbras* 'That man planted even fully grown elms in row, the hardened pear-tree, blackthorns already bearing plums and the plane tree already providing shade for drinkers.' Note also that the function of Horace's *laurea*, the final tree mentioned in his description of the pleasure garden at lines 9–10 (*spissa ramis laurea feruidos | excludet ictus*), corresponds directly to the function of the *platanus*, the final tree of Virgil's account.
 5. The phrase *fertilibus domino priori* uses the same unusual construction—*fertilis* in the sense 'prolific' with a dative—as that used at *G.* 4.128 *nec fertilis illa iuuencis*:²⁵ these are the first two examples of this usage on record.²⁶

2. THE BETRAYAL OF THE GEORGIC MODEL IN *CARMEN* 2.15

The allusive relationship between *Carmen* 2.15 and *G.* 4.125–48 is as contrastive as that sketched by West for *Carmen* 2.6.²⁷ In *Carmen* 2.6 Horace corrects his predecessor on the issue of Tarentum's climate: where Virgil had described an infertile region beset by long, harsh winters and rock-breaking cold (*G.* 4.128–9, 135–8), Horace had responded with a smiling landscape of long spring, warm winters and abundant fertility (*Carm.* 2.6.13–24). *Carmen* 2.15 likewise pivots away from this Virgilian image of infertility, but it does so in a distinctive manner. At issue in our poem is not whether the fields under Tarentum's towers are fit or unfit for agriculture, since the geography of this ode is removed from Tarentum. The Lucrine Lake at lines 3–4 may put Horace's reader in mind of the area of Puteoli, but it does not locate his *pauca iugera* in this or in any specific region of Italy. Rather the Lucrine Lake—renovated into naval dockyards by Agrippa during the Sicilian War (Suet. *Aug.* 16)—features as a famous, large body of water serving a public interest. It is thus morally aligned with the ethos of the second half of the poem, and it is included as a point of contrast to the private and useless

²³ Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 100, Thomas (n. 19), 2.171, Mynors (n. 7), 276, Harrison (n. 6), 94, 98.

²⁴ Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 244.

²⁵ Noted by Mynors (n. 7), 276.

²⁶ See *TLL* 6.1587.13–63, especially 30, 34; cf. 42, 56, 60.

²⁷ On corrective allusion (*oppositio in imitando*) more generally, see G. Giangrande, "'Arte allusiva" and Alexandrian epic poetry', *CQ* 17 (1967), 85–97; R.F. Thomas, 'Virgil's *Georgics* and the art of reference', *HSPH* 90 (1986), 171–98, at 185–9.

ornamental pools of the new pleasure gardens that will exaggeratedly take up more space than this monumental public work. This comparison runs parallel to the manner in which the pleasure gardens themselves will hyperbolically squeeze out almost all arable land in the poem. The geography of *Carmen* 2.15 is non-specific for the same reason that it lacks a specific addressee, and that is to make the author's moralizing point as universal as possible.²⁸

The primary relevance of Virgil's description of the Corycian gardener for *Carmen* 2.15 is the morally edifying image it conveys of the old man's unrelenting labour on a small and unpromising plot of land and the self-sufficiency resulting from this labour over many years. Horace inverts the coordinates of this image to sharpen his own description of perfectly fertile land and long-developed productivity being wasted by the farm's new owners: Virgil's Corycian *senex* is evoked as a model of behaviour in order to illustrate the perversion of this ideal in *Carmen* 2.15. Thus, Virgil's contention at *G.* 4.128–9 that the farmer's land is *nec fertilis illa iuuencis | nec pecori opportuna seges nec commoda Baccho* 'not productive for oxen [that is, ploughing], nor fit for pasturage, nor suited for viticulture' sets the context for his hard-won success in making his plot productive. It is answered directly by Horace's detail at *Carm.* 2.15.7–8, that the violets, myrtles and other plants now cultivated only for their fragrance have displaced olive groves that were *fertilibus domino priori* 'productive for their former master'. The productivity and self-sufficiency of the Corycian gardener is clear throughout Virgil's episode—it has been seen, for example, in his independence from larger society²⁹—and is expressed most explicitly and memorably at *G.* 4.133 *dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis* 'he heaped his tables with unbought feasts'.³⁰ This was a phrase that Horace himself had used to evoke rustic self-sufficiency at *Epod.* 2.48–9, where the farmer's wife *dapes inemptas | apparet* 'serves unbought feasts'.³¹ Although the relative dating of the composition of *Epode* 2 and the *Georgics* is beyond certainty, it is probable on textual grounds that Horace was already alluding to Virgil's Corycian gardener in *Epode* 2, and that he saw in the phrase a neat symbol of agricultural self-sufficiency.³² Within *Carmen* 2.15 the repeated emphasis upon the non-productive plantings of the farm can be set against this Virgilian paradigm: *platanusque caelebs euincet ulmos* pointedly denies any agricultural productivity to the new plantings and insinuates that the elm

²⁸ Cf. S. Commager, *The Odes of Horace. A Critical Study* (Bloomington, 1967), 86, who interprets the lack of an addressee as here implying a national scandal rather than an individual folly.

²⁹ M.C.J. Putnam, *Virgil's Poem of the Earth: Studies in the Georgics* (Princeton, 1979), 251–2; J. Strauss Clay, 'The old man in the garden: *Georgic* 4.116–148', *Arethusa* 14 (1981), 57–65, at 61; C. Nappa, *Reading after Actium: Vergil's Georgics, Octavian and Rome* (Ann Arbor, 2005), 171.

³⁰ On the farmer's self-sufficiency, see e.g. Putnam (n. 29), 251–2; G.B. Miles, *Virgil's Georgics: A New Interpretation* (Berkeley, 1980), 240; M. Gale, *Virgil on the Nature of Things: The Georgics, Lucretius and the Didactic Tradition* (Cambridge, 2000), 181–2.

³¹ L.C. Watson, *A Commentary on Horace's Epodes* (Oxford, 2003), 113, ad loc.

³² Watson (n. 31), 76–7 with references. Compelling arguments for Virgilian priority have been advanced by Pieri (n. 5) and Oksala (n. 5), viz. Virgil's allusions to Lucretius appear to be unmediated through Horace, and *Epode* 2 appears to refer to passages drawn from the whole of the *Georgics*. If (as is less likely) the phrase was Horace's to begin with and was borrowed by Virgil, it (of course) takes nothing away from the power of the phrase to invoke self-sufficiency, and Virgil's use of Horace's phrase would mark the episode in *Georgics* Book 4 as one that would naturally draw Horace's close interest. *CQ*'s anonymous reader makes the intriguing suggestion that *Hor. Epod.* 16.1 *altera iam teritur bellis ciuilibus aetas*, read as a reaction to *Verg. Ecl.* 4.4 *ultima Cumaei uenit iam carminis aetas*, constitutes an earlier Horatian contrast of Virgilian idealism with harsh contemporary reality, with the allusion implying for the reader that the prophecy of the *Eclogues* remains unfulfilled.

trees of the prior farm were used for viticulture (see below); the cultivation of fragrant plants over a fertile olive grove makes the same point, as do the inert resonances of the *stagna lacu*, and the planting of laurels to cast shade.³³

A further relevant dimension to Virgil's farmer is his contentment with the sufficiency of his farm and the equanimity this brings him.³⁴ We are told at *G.* 4.132–3 *regum aequabat opes animis seraque reuertens | nocte domum dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis* 'in happiness he equalled the wealth of kings and returning home late at night he used to heap his tables with unbought feasts'. Horace responds to these lines when he describes the villa that now crowds out the ploughland as *regiae moles* 'massive structures worthy of a king': the measure of the farmer's inner happiness is thus converted by Horace into the means by which his new owners seek relentlessly to expand their material possessions.³⁵ The dynamic of increasing material acquisition is conveyed in the phrase *iam ... relinquunt* 'soon they will leave', since it describes an ongoing process of the villa building's expansion;³⁶ if we take *iam* as also modifying the next two future-tense verbs as well, *uisentur* and *euincet*, the same dynamic process of expansion can be seen in the hyperbole of fishponds larger than the Lucrine Lake and plane trees displacing elms.

In *Carmen* 2.15 the new gardens crowd out elms previously in use for viticulture (2.15.5) and replace abundant olive trees (2.15.7–8). Time is a factor in the moralizing message of this detail, since both of these plants are slow growing, and point to the patient cultivation of the farm over many years. Columella tells us that elms for supporting vines are planted in rich or moderately rich soil (*Rust.* 16.1 *eaque maxime serenda est locis pinguibus uel etiam mediocribus*): a point that further reinforces the wasted fertility of Horace's new pleasure gardens. Columella notes that elms take three years before they can be shaped to receive the vine and six years before the vine can be 'wedded' to it (*Rust.* 16.3 *sexto anno, si iam firma uidebitur, maritabis hoc modo*). This process of 'wedding' the vine to a mature elm tree is what Horace draws our attention to when he describes the plane tree that displaces the elm as *caelebs* ('a bachelor'). As Nisbet and Hubbard explain, *caelebs* prompts us to understand the adjective *maritas* ('married') with *ulmos*.³⁷ Another hint at the previous farm's long and productive tenure can be found in the mention of its former olive groves. Olive cuttings take at least five years to be transplanted to the grove (Columella, *Rust.* 5.6), where they must not be trimmed for two further years (Columella, *Rust.* 5.11).³⁸ Virgil had called the olive tree *tarde crescens* 'slowly growing' (*G.* 2.3), echoing

³³ Which, of course, the Corycian gardener does as well at *G.* 4.146 in addition to the productive use he makes of his plot of land.

³⁴ See e.g. Miles (n. 30), 238–40; C. Perrell, 'On the Corycian gardener of Vergil's fourth *Georgic*', *TAPhA* 111 (1981), 167–77, at 171–2; Gale (n. 30), 181; R. Monreal, 'Vergils Vermächtnis: Die Gartenpraeteritio in den *Georgica* (4.116–48) und Typen ihrer Rezeption im neulateinischen Lehrgedicht', *HumLov* 54 (2005), 1–47, at 7: 'wird der Greis als zufriedener Gärtner beschrieben'.

³⁵ Contrast E.W. Leach, '*Sedes apibus*: from the *Georgics* to the *Aeneid*', *Vergilius* 23 (1977), 2–16, at 6 (on Verg. *G.* 4.132): the Corycian gardener 'gathers *dapes inemptae* for his own satisfaction and reaps rewards that are largely immaterial'.

³⁶ For *iam* as 'soon', see Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 244 on 2.15.1 *iam*, where they compare Hor. *Carm.* 1.4.16 *iam te premet nox* 'soon night will close around you' and 2.5.10–12 *iam tibi liuidos | distinguet Autumnus racemos | purpureo uariis colore* 'soon [you will see] Autumn variegated with radiant colour will set off the darkening clusters'.

³⁷ Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 245.

³⁸ Cf. J. Sargeant, *The Trees, Shrubs and Plants of Virgil* (Oxford, 1920), 90.

Theophrastus (*Caus. pl.* 1.8.4 ἐλαία δυσσυχῆ ‘the olive slow in growing’) and Varro’s *De re rustica* (1.41.5 *olea in crescendo tarda* ‘the olive slow in growing’).³⁹ The replacement of the olive-trees with myrtle in *Carmen* 2.15 is especially egregious, not only because the latter is being planted for its fragrance rather than for its fruit but also since the myrtle and the olive tree were well-known examples of ‘mutually affectionate’ trees (Theophr. *Caus. pl.* 3.10.4 προσφιλή ... δένδρα): intertwining olive and myrtle had a beneficial effect upon the quality of the myrtle’s berries. I suggest that Horace’s moralizing point comes not just from the useless, self-indulgent and unproductive nature of the elm and the plane tree⁴⁰ but also from the longevity of the farm under its previous owners, which we can infer from in its modes of agricultural production.

This issue of carefully cultivated, slow-growth trees and their moral symbolism should be on the reader’s mind, because it clusters in the two poems immediately preceding *Carmen* 2.15 and is present in Virgil’s vignette of the Corycian gardener. The penultimate stanza of *Carmen* 2.14 had the vivid image of all that must be left behind when we die, a tricolon that climaxes in the trees cultivated by Postumus on his property (2.14.21–4):

linquenda tellus et domus et placens
 uxor, neque harum quas colis arborum
 te praeter inuisas cupressos
 ulla breuem dominum sequetur ...

The earth must be left behind, and your house, and your beloved wife, and none of these trees which you cultivate will follow their short-lived master [*sc.* to the grave] except the hateful cypresses ...

The poem immediately prior, *Carmen* 2.13, had opened with a different image of a tree passing from owner to owner (2.13.1–4):

Ille et nefasto te posuit die,
 quicumque primum, et sacrilega manu
 produxit, arbos, in nepotum
 perniciem opprobriumque pagi ...

That man, whoever he was, first planted you on an inauspicious day and he tended you with a sacrilegious hand, tree, to the destruction of his descendants and the disgrace of the village ...

The elm’s age seems also to be an active issue in the *Georgics*. Virgil seems to stress the maturity of the elm trees that the Corycian farmer transplanted at *G.* 4.144 *seras in uersum distulit ulmos* (‘he planted out elms in rows *after the normal time*’, *OLD s.v. seras* 2b). The majority of critics see the adjective *seras* as describing the mature status of the trees being transplanted and the detail as imparting a veneer of unreality to the farmer’s activities.⁴¹ Manfred Erren has offered an alternative interpretation of

³⁹ Mynors (n. 7), 100.

⁴⁰ Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 245.

⁴¹ Serv. on Verg. *G.* 4.144 *maiores: quod nimiae difficultatis est*; Putnam (n. 29), 251–2; Miles (n. 30), 239; D.O. Ross, *Virgil’s Elements: Physics and Poetry in the Georgics* (Princeton, 1987), 201–2; Thomas (n. 19), 2.174: ‘when transplanted, the old man’s elms are advanced in growth ... there is an element of exaggeration’; C. Perkell, *The Poet’s Truth: A Study of the Poet in Virgil’s Georgics* (Berkeley, 1989), 130–1; Mynors (n. 7), 277: ‘trees which were already, one might think,

seras—namely, that it pertains to the late season of an old man’s life (that is, *OLD* s.v. *serus* 5b ‘[occurring] at a late hour’).⁴² This seems less convincing, but can nevertheless be put into dialogue with the moralizing message of *Carmen* 2.15 as well, for, on Erren’s analysis, the old man plants young trees whose full maturity he himself will not enjoy, as a gift for the next generation, while in Horace’s version the long-established elm trees of the former farm are overwhelmed by sterile ornaments in the next generation of owners.

3. ‘A FEW ACRES’ ECHOED IN *CARMEN* 3.16

It was noted earlier that Horace also used the collocation *pauca iugera* in *Carmen* 3.16. Its appearance here is relevant to its use in both *Carmen* 2.15 and the *Georgics*, since it can be seen to mark this poem as a further point of reference in Horace’s reception of Virgil’s passage. The phrase occurs in Horace’s description of his Sabine farm at *Carm.* 3.16.29–38:

purae riuus aquae siluaque iugerum
paucorum et segetis certa fides meae
fulgentem imperio fertilis Africae
fallit sorte beator.

quamquam nec Calabriae mella ferunt apes
nec Laestrygonia Bacchus in amphora
languescit mihi nec pinguia Gallicis
crescunt uellera pascuis,

importuna tamen pauperies abest,
nec, si plura uelim, tu dare deneges.

A brook of pure water, a wood of a few acres and the dependable good faith of my crops are a more blessed lot, although this escapes the notice of the brilliant lord of fertile Africa. Although Calabrian bees do not bring me honey, nor does Bacchus mellow for me in Laestrygonian amphorae, nor do rich fleeces grow for me in Gallic pastureland, yet oppressive poverty is absent, and nor, if I should wish for more, would you refuse to give it.

There are a number of elements in these lines that may be read as marking an allusion to the *Georgics*.

1. The grammatical case of the key phrase *siluaque iugerum paucorum* has shifted from nominative to genitive, but this should not render it a less effective marker of allusion to its earlier uses in the nominative in Virgil and in *Carmen* 2.15.⁴³ The fact that it had only been used in these three locations at the time *Odes* Books 1–3 were published is more than enough to give it privileged status. Indeed, Virgil’s full phrase *cui pauca relictis | iugera ruris erant* shows that Horace’s phrase is an inversion of Virgil’s grammar wherein a noun/adjective pair in the nominative (*pauca iugera*) is modified by a genitive (*ruris*), so that a

too big to move’; Erren (n. 22), 837: ‘Ausgewachsene Ulmen zu spät umzupflanzen, wie Servius vermutet, wäre für einen alten Mann so närrisch wie unmöglich’; Nappa (n. 29), 174.

⁴² Erren (n. 22), 837: ‘Der mit *seras* in den Blick genomene nahe oder schon überschrittene natürliche Termin (s. zu 1,251) ist das bevorstehende Ende des Alten.’

⁴³ Cf. Wills (n. 18), 27–8, 55–6, 272–89.

near-synonym in the nominative (*silua*) is modified by the same noun/adjective pair (*iugerum paucorum*). We should also note the rarity of the word *iugerum* in Virgil and Horace more generally: it occurs only three times in the *Odes* (again only at 3.24.12) and, perhaps more surprisingly, only twice in the *Georgics* (again only at 2.264). We may even see a self-annotating pun marking the allusion in the phrase *silua paucorum iugerum* in the sense ‘the raw material (for poetry) consisting of “a few acres”’ (*OLD* s.v. *silua* 5b), in which *pauca iugera* now refers specifically to Virgil’s description of the Corycian gardener’s few acres in *Georgics* Book 4 and the rich material it offers to Horace’s lyric project.⁴⁴

2. Horace’s description of the agricultural products that are unavailable to him—honey, wine and pasturage (*Carm.* 3.16.33–6)—evoke further specific details from the Corycian gardener’s plot. Bees and honey at line 33 clearly look to the farm of the Corycian gardener, which is also located in Calabria,⁴⁵ which is described in a book dedicated to apiculture, and whose owner raises bees: *G.* 4.139–41 *apibus fetis idem atque examine multo | primus abundare et spumantia cogere pressis | mella fauis* (‘he was likewise the first to abound in fruitful bees and a great swarm and to collect foaming honey from the pressed honeycomb’). The wine and pasturage not provided on Horace’s *Sabinum* were also noted for their absence in Virgil’s description of the Corycian gardener’s plot at *G.* 4.129 *nec pecori opportuna seges nec commoda Baccho*.

Whereas I have argued that *Carmen* 2.15 illustrates the perversion of an ideal embodied by the Corycian *senex*, *Carmen* 3.16 rather affirms some of the most prominent aspects of the *Georgics* passage in order to co-opt it for its own moralizing purposes. The contentment of the Corycian farmer and the productive use to which he puts his small plot of land offer a paradigm for Horace’s profession of fulfilment with the gift of the Sabine estate. At the same time, the relationship of *Carmen* 3.16 with the *Georgics* also puts it in dialogue with *Carmen* 2.15. The emphasis in *Carmen* 3.16 upon contentment with the Sabine farm, even in contrast to larger—indeed, fantastically larger⁴⁶—estates, is cut from the same cloth as the contrast in *Carmen* 2.15 between the simple productivity of the old farm and the ever-increasing material development of the present farm, and the contrast is made by the same style of exaggerated comparison we see at *Carm.* 2.15.2–4.⁴⁷ So too, the philosophically tinged expression *sorte beator* and other maxims in *Carmen* 3.16 regarding limitation of desire (3.16.21–3, 38–9, 43–4) may in light of this allusion evoke for the reader the philosophical language expressing the contentment of the *senex* at *G.* 4.132 *regum aequabat opes animis*:⁴⁸ such

⁴⁴ On *silua* self-annotating an allusion, see Hinds (n. 17), 11–13; on *silua* annotating Horatian intertextuality, see P. Roche, ‘A fawn in the wood: *inuleus* in Horace *Carmen* 1.23’, *CPh* 108 (2013), 346–51, at 349–50.

⁴⁵ Nisbet and Rudd (n. 5), 209 remind us that ancient Calabria was the south east of Italy.

⁴⁶ Nisbet and Rudd (n. 5), 208: ‘the imaginary owner of impossibly large estates ... is described hyperbolically as ruling over the country.’

⁴⁷ Of course, the basic point and the style of comparison is not unique to these two poems: cf. e.g. *Carm.* 2.2.9–12.

⁴⁸ For *beatus* as a term of philosophy linked to control of the appetites, see e.g. Cic. *Fin.* 1.62 *ab Epicuro sapiens semper beatus inducitur: finitas habet cupiditates* ... (‘the wise man is advanced by Epicurus as always fortunate; boundaries limit his desires ...’); more generally see *TLL* 2.1909.32–1912.22 and note comments at 1909.32 and 1912.21–2; L. O’Hearn, ‘Being *beatus* in Catullus’ poems 9, 10, 22 and 23’, *CQ* 70 (2021), 691–706. For the Corycian gardener as a philosophical ideal, see A. La Penna, ‘*Senex Corycius*’, in *Atti del Convegno Virgiliano sul bimillenario delle Georgiche* (Naples, 1977), 37–66, especially 60–3. For the notion of the Stoic

phrases evoke paradigms of self-control and contentment that are transgressed by the new farm-owners of *Carmen* 2.15. There are, to be clear, distinct differences in the messages of the two lyric poems: the basic message of *Carmen* 2.15 that expansive luxury villas and their *horti* transgress a positive model of antique simplicity is not the same as the message in *Carmen* 3.16 of the poet's contentment with the sufficiency provided him by Maecenas. Nevertheless, the key phrase *siluaque iugerum | paucorum* is, I think, more than merely an expression of 'antique frugality',⁴⁹ and acts as an invitation to draw *Carmen* 3.16 into meaningful dialogue with *Carmen* 2.15 and *G.* 4.125–48.

CONCLUSION

Kiessling considered *Carmen* 2.15 a fragment that Horace found unusable in the 'Roman Odes' and so relocated it to its present position in Book 2.⁵⁰ This view underestimates our poem and imagines an *ad hoc* process of composition and arrangement at odds with the reading experience offered by Horace's lyric poetry. One aspect that may contribute to a more nuanced appraisal of *Carmen* 2.15 is its full integration with the themes and motifs of Book 2. An important part of this integration is the way in which it participates in a sequence of allusions to the *Georgics*, and to the description of the Corycian gardener more specifically. In this article I have argued that *Carmen* 2.15 may be read as a melancholy revisitation of the more optimistic engagement of *Carmen* 2.16 with Virgil's scene. Conversely, *Carmen* 3.16 positively aligns Horace with the moral ethos of Virgil's gardener, and the contrast between *Carmina* 2.15 and 3.16 is enhanced by their shared evocation of an industrious old man and the contentment he finds through hard work on a modest plot of land. When Horace turns at *Carm.* 2.15.10 from the unproductive luxury items of the farm's contemporary owners to the *mores* and the *census breuis* of antique *exempla*, his reader is already prepared for the moralizing contrast by the relationship that *Carmen* 2.15 has with Virgil's Corycian farmer. The new owners of Horace's farm fail not only against the measure of Romulus and Cato but also against the measure of Virgil's celebrated vignette of careful cultivation and self-sufficiency.

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sapiens as a king, see Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.124–8, *Epist.* 1.1.106–7, *Carm.* 2.2.21 with Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]) and e.g. Plut. *De tranq. anim.* 472A.

⁴⁹ Nisbet and Rudd (n. 5), 208.

⁵⁰ A. Kiessling, *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Oden und Epoden*, fourth edn, rev. by R. Heinze (Berlin, 1901), 203; H.P. Syndikus, *Die Lyrik des Horaz: eine Interpretation der Oden* (Darmstadt, 1972), 438 connected it rather to the *Epodes* in scale and tone, and judged that it must be early composition. Nisbet and Hubbard (n. 5 [1978]), 243 also saw it as foreshadowing the Roman Odes but were more appreciative of its 'solidity of construction ... concentration and authority'. For reflection on the term 'Roman Odes', see A.J. Woodman, 'Horace's "Roman Odes"', *CJ* 115 (2020), 276–82.