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NOW THAT APRIL'S THERE: HORACE, *ODES* 3.18*

Faune, Nympharum fugientum amator,
per meos finis et aprica rura
lenis incedas abeasque paruis
aequus alumnis, 4

si tener pleno cadit haedus anno
larga nec desunt Veneris sodali
uina creterrae, uetus ara multo
fumat odore. 8

Ludit herboso pecus omne campo,
cum tibi Nonae redeunt Decembres;
festus in pratis uacat otioso
cum boue pagus; 12

inter audacis lupus errat agnos,
spargit agrestis tibi silua frondes,
gaudet inuisam pepulisse fossor
ter pede terram.[1] 16

9–10 *transposuit Peerlkamp* 9–16 *secl. Cucchiarelli* (13–16 *iam Peerlkamp*)
12 pardus *codd. nonnulli* 14 arentis (*iam Cornelissen*) ubi *L. Müller*

Faunus, lover of the nymphs who run from you, come gently through my domain and sunny countryside and depart again kindly to my small nurselings, seeing that a kid is slaughtered at the completion of the year (5) and wine in plenty is not lacking to the

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[1] The transmitted text is accepted by the majority of modern editors, commentators, and translators, e.g. M. Lenchantin de Gubernatis and D. Bo, *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, vol. 1 (second edition, Turin, 1957–8); F. Klingner, *Horatius. Opera* (third edition, Leipzig, 1959); A. Kiessling and R. Heinze, *Q. Horatius Flaccus. Oden und Epoden* (eleventh edition, Zurich and Berlin, 1964); G. Williams, *The Third Book of Horace's Odes* (Oxford, 1969); G. P. Goold, *Q. Horati Flacci Carminum Libri IV* (Groton, MA, 1977); K. Quinn, *Horace. The Odes* (London, 1980); S. Borzsák, *Horatius. Opera* (Leipzig, 1984); D. West, *Horace Odes III. Dulce Periculum* (Oxford, 2002); R. G. M. Nisbet and N. Rudd, *A Commentary on Horace. Odes Book III* (Oxford, 2004); N. Rudd, *Horace. Odes and Epodes*, Loeb Classical Library 33 (Cambridge, MA, 2004). L. Müller's rendering of line 14 is adopted by A. Y. Campbell, *Horace. Odes and Epodes* (Liverpool, 1953) and D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Horatius. Opera* (Stuttgart 1985).

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mixing-bowl, the companion of Venus: the ancient altar is smoking with much incense; the whole flock plays over the grassy plain, as the Nones of December return in your honour (10), the village in festivity takes its ease in the meadows, together with the ox on holiday too, the wolf wanders amongst the lambs that are unafraid, the rustic wood throws down its leaves in your honour (14), the ditcher rejoices to pound the hated earth three times with his foot.[2]

Although we know from Ovid (*Fast.* 2.193) that the Faunalia were officially celebrated on 13 February, Horace's ode has ensured that a local festival of Faunus on 5 December, for which there is no other evidence,[3] should take its place in the cultic calendar of the Italian countryside:

> Here we have the essence of true Roman country religion: the appeal to the vague and possibly dangerous spirit that guards the flocks to be present, but not to linger too long; the smoking altar of earth; the simple offering of wine and kid; the gambolling sheep; the quiet relaxation after the year's toil, and the dance on the hated land which had demanded so much labour.[4]

Fraenkel described the ode admiringly as 'a little masterpiece',[5] yet its interpretation raises more questions than appear at first sight. Quinn, for example, seems to think that the entire ode is set on the Nones of December, whereas Nisbet and Rudd think that Faunus' visit starts 'in spring or summer' and lasts 'till his December festival'. Which of these, if either, is correct?

In the first half of the ode (1–8) Horace prays to Faunus and guarantees him an annual sacrifice. Nisbet and Rudd describe the prayer as a 'summons' and identify it as 'kletic', but this cannot be right, since in the same breath the god is asked to depart no less than to come (3–4: *lenis incedas abeasque… | aequus*).[6] The fact is that *lenis incedas* does not mean 'may you progress and be gentle about it' but 'may your progress

[2] Translation from Williams (n. 1), slightly adjusted.

[3] Both Porphyrio and pseudo-Acro on line 10 refer to Faunalia on 5 December, but their information presumably derives from Horace's ode and has no independent value.

[4] H. H. Scullard, *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic* (London, 1981), 201. According to pseudo-Probus on Verg. *G.* 1.10, Faunus had monthly feast days: scholars assume that the day described by Horace was one such and was of interest only to him (it was three days before his birthday) and his country neighbours (Scullard [this note], 72, 201). H. P. Syndikus, on the other hand, is keen to see the ode in terms of Greek literary motifs and the like (*Die Lyrik des Horaz* [third edition, Darmstadt, 2001], ii.163–7).

[5] E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), 205, n. 2.

[6] Nisbet and Rudd also talk of the god receiving 'his annual reward' and being 'honoured for his protection of flocks throughout the past year', which seems incompatible with the notions of a summons and sacrificial bargain.

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be gentle', just as *abeasque...aequus* means 'and may your departure be favourable'. Horace is neither summoning the god nor sending him off: Faunus' visit is taken for granted, which is hardly surprising since we were told in 1.17.1–2 that he visits Horace's estate 'often' (*saepe*). It is the *manner* of his visit for which the annual sacrifice constitutes the *quid pro quo*.

Faunus' visit is associated with a time when the young animals are small (3–4: *paruis | ...alumnis*): no type of animal is specified, but Nisbet and Rudd think that the reference is to lambs and kids. Since the sacrificial victim is a young kid (5) and lambs are mentioned later (13), the likelihood is that the commentators are right. Now according to Varro (*Rust.* 2.3.8: *tempore uerno*), Columella (*Rust.* 7.6.6: *iam propinquante uere...cum primum siluae noua germinant fronde*) and the elder Pliny (*NH* 8.200: *mense ut Martio pariant turgescentibus uirgultis*), goats are born in spring when the woods are sprouting with new foliage.[7] Lambs, too, were born in the spring (Columella, *Rust.* 7.3.11; cf. 11.2.14), although they might also be born at the very end of autumn (Varro, *Rust.* 2.2.14: *exitu autumnali*). Thus the evidence, if not entirely conclusive, suggests that *abeasque paruis aequus alumnis* is likely to refer to springtime, a suggestion seemingly confirmed by Horace's allusion to Faunus advancing across 'the sunlit countryside' (2–3: *per aprica rura | lenis incedas*). Indeed, since *apricus* was thought to have the same derivation from *aperire* as *Aprilis*,[8] Horace may be alluding to that particular month for Faunus' visit.

The timing of the god's annual sacrifice, on the other hand, is neither spring nor autumn at all but early December (10); according to the text generally adopted by scholars, however, this is the occasion when 'the whole flock plays in the grassy field' (9) and 'the festal community holidays in the meadows alongside the idle ox' (11–12). This is very odd indeed. It is inappropriate to describe December fields as 'grassy', since grassy fields are above all a symbol of spring (cf. 4.7.1: *redeunt iam gramina campis*); and in winter the flock should be in its pens (1.4.3: *stabulis gaudet pecus*; Calp. *Ecl.* 5.103: *cum pecudes extremus clauserit annus* [cf. 5.24]): it is in spring that it plays in the fields (Ov. *Fast.* 1.156: *ludit et in pratis luxuriatque pecus*). The idleness of the ox would be nothing remarkable in winter (cf. Cato, *Agr.* 54.5: *boues...per*

[7] For more on the life-cycle of goats, see F. Cairns, *Roman Lyric* (Berlin and Boston, 2012), 399–400.

[8] See R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), 44, for both words.

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hiemem…non arabunt), but the animals would be put to work in the spring (Ov. *Fast.* 1.159: *tum patitur cultus ager et renouatur aratro*) and would welcome a day off for a festival (Tib. 2.1.7–8). Kiessling and Heinze point out that, according to Columella (*Rust.* 11.2.90), early December coincides with the end of the sowing season, but they do not observe that he sees this period as characterized by its 'long nights', an opportunity for a whole list of tasks that should be done by artificial light indoors. Columella does not mention 5 December specifically, but he says that on the following day 'a storm is portended' and that by 13 December 'the weather is wintry' (11.2.93–4). Early December hardly seems the time for *al fresco* partying, which one would expect rather to take place in the spring (perhaps cf. Nicaen. 4 ap. Athen. 15.673B = *Hellenistic Epigrams* 2703–4).

Nisbet and Rudd, like most other commentators, do not seem to recognize a problem,[9] yet the poem embodies a fundamental contradiction: springtime provides the background to both the epiphany of Faunus (1–4) *and* the sacrifice to Faunus (9, 11–12), but the sacrifice is explicitly dated to 5 December (10).

In his excellent discussion of the ode, Peerlkamp not only appreciated the difficulty but also suggested a neat solution.[10] He transposed lines 9 and 10, taking the *cum*-clause with the account of the sacrifice in 5–8 and punctuating after *Decembres*: '…and the ancient altar smokes with its abundant aroma when the December Nones come round again in your honour. The entire flock plays in the grassy field…'. Peerlkamp thus drew a distinction between Faunus' December sacrifice (5–<9>) and his springtime visitation (1–4 and <10>–12).[11] In Peerlkamp's support is the fact that the lines could have become disordered because each begins in a similar fashion (*CU-* and *LU-*); but, in an ode designed to establish a relationship between the god's visit and his sacrifice, it seems counter-intuitive to have visit and sacrifice several months apart: West in his commentary not unnaturally refers to 'the presence of Faunus at his own festival'.[12] Moreover Peerlkamp's transposition means that the ode – which, as some commentators observe, is otherwise conspicuous for its symmetries – no longer divides neatly into

[9] Nisbet and Rudd (n. 1), 219–20.
[10] P. H. Peerlkamp, *Q. Horatii Flacci Carmina* (Harlem, 1834).
[11] A similar distinction is proposed by A. J. Macleane, *Quinti Horatii Flacci Opera Omnia* (fourth edition, London, 1881) but his interpretation, which involves some re-punctuation but no transposition, does not address the main problem.
[12] West (n. 1), 162.

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two halves. Such an objection would not have troubled Peerlkamp, however, since he also proposed deleting the last stanza of the ode entirely. His deletion has been supported recently by A. Cucchiarelli, who went further and proposed deleting the third stanza as well.[13] Yet neither of these deletions is at all likely if we see significance, as I think we should, in the esoteric fact that, as transmitted, odes 7–30 of Book 3 comprise exactly twice the number of lines and stanzas as the so-called 'Roman' odes.[14] Moreover, the syllabic artistry of 13–16 seems utterly typical of this 'artiste de sons':[15]

inter audaces ***lup****us* errat *agnos*,
spargit agrestis tibi silua frondes,
gaudet inuisam ***pepul****isse fossor*
ter pede terra*m*.

A different solution is called for.

Since in Book 1 of the *Odes* Horace talks of sacrificing to Faunus in the spring (1.4.11–12: *Fauno decet immolare. . .haedo*), perhaps line 10 of our ode should read *cum tibi Nonae redeunt Apriles*. Although the substitution of *Apriles* for *Decembres* will undoubtedly appear drastic, one can advance a good explanation of how the proposed error may have come about. In line 5, Horace refers to the kid being sacrificed *pleno. . .anno*. This is a regular form of words (cf. *TLL* 10.1.2416.9–17), but it has been interpreted in different ways. Kiessling believed that Horace is referring to the age of the kid, although such a reference seems redundant alongside *tener*; Heinze, on the other hand, argued that the phrase should not be taken as indicating that the goat is a yearling (*anniculus*): he believed – correctly, in my opinion – that Horace is referring to the twelve-month period between each sacrifice.[16] Nisbet and Rudd dismiss this interpretation and, like the majority of commentators, believe that the expression means 'when the calendar year is complete'. Now this interpretation is of course influenced by the reference to the Nones of December in line 10; but, if a scribe too believed that this

[13] A. Cucchiarelli, 'Nonae Decembres: un'interpolazione in Hor. carm. 3, 18, 9–16', *MD* 68 (2012), 203–21. For the hypothetical eight-line poem which results he compared *Anth. Pal.* 6.300, which ends with the promise of a sacrificed kid.

[14] See L. A. Moritz, 'Some "Central" Thoughts on Horace's *Odes*', *CQ* 18 (1968), 118. The numbers correspond only if 3.12 is printed as four four-line stanzas, as in the editions of Goold or Quinn.

[15] This is the title of an article on Horace by J. Marouzeau, *Mnemosyne* 4 (1936), 85–94.

[16] Kiessling and Heinze (n. 1), ad loc.

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was the meaning of the expression, as it is at Prop. 3.5.38, and was faced with a reference to April in line 10, he could easily resolve the conflict, because *Decembres* happily has the same prosody as *Apriles*.[17]

That Horace wrote *Apriles* rather than *Decembres* in line 10 is strongly supported by the reference to wine in lines 6–7: 'and generous helpings of wine are not absent from the bowl, that companion of Venus'. The wine is required for the sacrificial ritual, as the commentators explain, but why does Horace describe the bowl as 'the companion of Venus'? It is of course true that there was a proverbial connection between drink and sex,[18] but we should also remember that April, as Horace says elsewhere (4.11.15–16), was the month of Venus:[19] the description *Veneris sodali* in line 6 would gain added point if the sacrifice to Faunus were dated to 5 April in line 10.[20] It may be relevant to note that, when in his first spring ode Horace again mentions sacrificing to Faunus (1.4.11–12), that ode too may perhaps be dated to April with the help of its reference to Venus (1.4.5).[21]

Further support for a springtime sacrifice may be found in the reference to leaves in line 14. Numerous commentators note that fallen leaves are characteristic of December, quoting *Epode* 11.5–6 by way of illustration (*December…siluis honorem decutit*); most commentators also say that Horace is alluding to a ritualistic φυλλοβολία: 'the wood scatters leaves in honour of Faunus', in the words of Nisbet and Rudd.[22] But this is to ignore the fact that the leaves, being dry and dead, are scarcely an appropriate tribute for a visiting divinity: such leaves are used to symbolize an ageing courtesan at 1.25.19. It is significant that Campbell and Shackleton Bailey, when choosing to qualify *frondes* by Cornelissen's *arentis* instead of the seemingly otiose *agrestis*, also adopted L. Müller's *ubi* in order to mitigate precisely this difficulty.[23] On the other hand, spring is defined by its leafage (Ov. *Fast.* 1.153: *et modo formatis operitur frondibus arbor*), and, if Horace is referring to springtime, it is a flattering conceit to pretend that the trees are

[17] For the short initial syllable, see 4.11.16: *findit Aprilem*.
[18] A. Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer* (Leipzig, 1890), 366.
[19] Maltby (n. 8), 44.
[20] This point would be considerably strengthened if *Veneris sodali* referred to Faunus himself, as some editors believe. The Nones of April was the festival of Fortuna Publica (see Scullard [n. 4], 100), but it is universally recognized that in the ode we are dealing with a localized rural festival.
[21] See P. Defourny, 'Le printemps dans l'ode à Sestius', *LEC* 14 (1946), 174–94.
[22] Nisbet and Rudd (n. 1), 225.
[23] See further Nisbet and Rudd (n. 1), ad loc. Williams (n. 1) attractively took *agrestis* with *silua* (cf. Ov. *Met.* 7.242; Curt. 8.10.14).

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spreading their new leaves in honour of Faunus (for this sense of *spargo*, cf. Plin. *NH* 25.84: *spargens folia*).

The variant *pardus* for *pagus* in line 12 shows the magnitude of mistake of which a scribe is capable when he is wrongly influenced by the context of what he is transcribing. If the substitution of *Decembres* for *Apriles* is another such mistake, Horace indeed wrote, as Fraenkel said, 'a little masterpiece', in which 'mitten im Winter der Frühling beginnend' is out of the question.[24]

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[24] The words ('spring beginning in the middle of winter') are taken from E. Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes* (second edition, Leipzig and Berlin, 1931), 149, and used by A. W. J. Holleman as the subtitle to his article 'Horace, *Odes* 3.18', *Latomus* 31 (1972), 492–6.

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