From *deus absconditus* to Σωτήρ: Octavian in Virgil and early Augustan poetry

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The very earliest in the array of texts traditionally subsumed under the broad term Augustan poetry, Virgil's *Eclogue* 1, opens with a dialogue between two shepherds: Meliboeus, who finds himself forced to flee his homeland, and Tityrus, who is permitted to stay and thus go on doing what the writer of the poem also does – producing bucolic verse. How it has come about that he can stay while Meliboeus must go is explained by Tityrus as follows in ll. 6–10:

> *O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit.*
> *Namque erit ille mihi semper deus, illius aram*
> *saepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.*
> *Ille meas errare boves, ut cernis, et ipsum*
> *ludere quae vellem calamo permisit agresti.*

Then, right in the middle of the *Eclogue*, he describes his encounter in Rome with said benefactor (42–43):

> *Hic illum vidi iuvenem, Meliboee, quotannis*
> *bis senos cui nostra dies altaria fumant.*

Who, then, is this "youth" whom the bucolic poet Tityrus reverences as he would a god? Given that, when the figure's creator, the bucolic poet Virgil, was writing the proem to his second work (*Georgics*), around 29 BC, he chose to apostrophize as a god-to-be Caesar Octavian, who had been in his twenties when the *Eclogues* were composed,[1] Servius saw no reason to doubt

[1] I take them to have been published between 35 and 33 BC; for a discussion of dating criteria and theories, see Luther (2002).

in his commentary on Virgil that Tityrus' always-a-god-to-me *iuvenis* was the triumvir.[2] The majority of modern Virgilians are happy to accept this, but there are, of course, exceptions. Among the alternative candidates suggested, it is probably Asinius Pollio who, more than any other, merits serious consideration, he too being one of Virgil's patrons.[3] However, his name appears at two quite prominent moments in the *Eclogues* – 3.84–88, then 4.12 – and is even mentioned three times in the first of those. Why, then, should we imagine that Virgil suppressed the name in the very first poem of the collection? Especially, moreover, as we have two other *Eclogues* in which the poet introduces a nameless figure – in 4 a boy and in 8 a laurel-crowned victor – and those, many have maintained, stand for Octavian. Virgil's *Eclogues* would then thrice feature an anonymous who can reasonably be identified as Octavian. That, in turn, seems all the more probable in the light of the following observations: Horace, as we shall see, avoids any explicit naming of the *imperator* in several of his poems, and Virgil, at one point in the *Aeneid* (1.286–90), famously leaves us in the dark as to whether the Caesar he mentions is the dictator himself or his adopted son. Furthermore, the other poets whose works have come down to us from the thirties and twenties of the first century BC, Horace, Tibullus and Propertius, can quite generally be said to display conspicuous hesitancy and restraint when talking about or even just alluding to Octavian.[4] Thus he seems to be featured in early Augustan poetry as *deus absconditus* and only later, in poems composed after the *Aeneid*, expressly revered as Σωτήρ. I should like in the following to offer evidence that supports this but, for reasons of space, shall be confining myself to texts which predate the *Aeneid*.

The coming of the *puer*, it is said in *Ecl.* 4, will herald the beginning of a new Golden Age in 40 BC, the year of Pollio's consulship, and for the child himself await both the life of the gods and sway over a world to which his father's *virtutes* will have brought peace (7–17):

Iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
casta fave Lucina; tuus iam regnat Apollo.
Teque adeo decus hoc aevi, te consule, inibit,
Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses.
Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras.

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[2] Servius, *ad loc.*

[3] Cairns (2008).

[4] This is also true of Livy, who probably wrote his first pentad in the mid-twenties of the century and who seems similarly reluctant to mention Augustus. The proper name only appears there twice (1.19.3; 4.20.7), then later just one more time (28.12.12), and the *Iulia gens* is referred to but once (1.3.2).

Ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit
permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis
pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.

Unsurprisingly, it is hard to keep track of the countless theories put forward regarding this puzzling divine *puer* predicted to rule the world, and I shall not be attempting here to discuss all the solutions ever championed and refuted. I am in any case quite convinced that there is only one person this could be: the divine being who, yet again, cannot be named, simply has to be Octavian once again (and the pacifier, of course, his adoptive father Caesar). The prophetic words are clearly placed in a 63-BC mouth, one speaking, then, in the year of Octavian's birth and anticipating the year 40 BC. For the first 45 verses of the poem we seem, at first reading, to be hearing Virgil himself looking into the future, but then, after the last sentence of the prophecy, we suddenly hear that the Fates told their spindles, *talia saecula … currite* (46). Those sound like closing words, and so we now realise, on second reading, that, in ll. 4–45, the bucolic poet is retelling the Fates' song about the Golden Age for which the birth of the *puer* will pave the way, and which will come about once the latter has turned twenty-three.[5]

The bewreathed victor in *Ecl.* 8 is identified by a number of scholars as Octavian, and that for reasons which I also find irrefutable.[6] Virgil asks him (7–8):

en erit umquam
ille dies, mihi cum liceat tua dicere facta?

This clearly echoes a very similar wish in *Ecl*. 4.54–55:

O mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima vitae,
spiritus et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta.

That too suggests that we can take both the boy and the *imperator* to be Octavian, mindful that Virgil, who quite consciously structured his life's work as a three-phase progression,[7] declared his intention to tell of Caesar's heir and his deeds again in the *Georgics* – more about that presently – then brought the plan in his own particular way to fruition with his *Aeneid*.[8]

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5 Binder (1983), also Snijder (2010), where Binder's hypothesis is further underpinned with new arguments.

6 See esp. Mankin (1988) and, for the oft-disputed verses 9–10, Köhnken (1984).

7 Putnam (2010) 19.

8 One further indication that Octavian is the addressee in *Ecl.* 8.6–13: *a te principium; tibi desinam* in l. 11. Virgil is "quoting" Theocr. 17.1 there – Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα καὶ ἐς Δία λήγετε, Μοῖσαι – and Zeus, of course, is sometimes, *e.g.* for Horace, the heavenly being that corresponds to the earthly emperor Augustus (see below on *C.* 1.12.49–52). Theocr. 17, moreover, addresses Ptolemy II Philadelphus, whose relations with the Hellenistic poet were not unlike those between Virgil and Octavian / Augustus (suggested to me by Regina Höschele).

Quite soon after Virgil's *Eclogues* had come out, Horace published his first book of *Satires*. The poems are dedicated to Maecenas, with Octavian mentioned only once, and even then more or less casually (*Sat.* 1.3.4). At one point, moreover, it is clear that his name is left out deliberately: in *Sat.* 1.5, the *Iter Brundisinum*. There, in ll. 27–33, Horace talks about his stay in Anxur, remarking:

Huc venturus erat Maecenas optimus atque
Cocceius, missi magnis de rebus uterque
legati, aversos soliti componere amicos.
Hic oculis ego nigra meis collyria lippus
illinere. Interea Maecenas advenit atque
Cocceius Capitoque simul Fonteius, ad unguem
factus homo, Antoni, non ut magis alter, amicus.

In connection, then, with the meeting arranged for Octavian and M. Antonius, at which Maecenas and the other men specified here were supposed to mediate between the two, only Antonius is mentioned by name, while Octavian is kept anonymous, concealed among the *amicos* (27).[9] And the poet can quite literally close his eyes to this politically charged situation, forced as he is to cover them with ointment.[10]

Even after the Battle of Actium, fought on 2 September 31 BC, and the surrender of Alexandria twelve months later, one Roman poet can still be seen to avoid the mention of the victor's name: Tibullus, the first book of whose elegies must now, in the light of Peter Knox's findings, be dated to the year 29 / 28 BC rather than the hitherto generally accepted 27 / 26.[11] In elegy 1.7, the poet addresses his patron Messalla, and speaks not only of the awaited triumph granted the latter by Octavian – the occasion was Messalla's victory over the Aquitanian Gauls, which Knox dates with convincing arguments to 30 BC, although the actual procession was not to take place until 25 September 27 – but also, before that section, of "new triumphs" already celebrated (5–8):

novos pubes Romana triumphos
  vidit et evinctos bracchia capta duces:

[9] For Luke Houghton, "there is surely humour in Horace's repeated frustration of the reader's expectation that he will name Octavian immediately after Maecenas. Lines 27 and 31 both end *Maecenas … atque*, setting up the expectation of Octavian at the start of the following line, but once the suspense of the line-ending is resolved, on both occasions the name is revealed to be (the rather less exalted) Cocceius" (*per litteras*).

[10] Oliensis (1998) 28.

[11] See Knox (2005).

ac te victrices laurus, Messalla, gerentem
portabit niveis currus eburnus equis.[12]

These previous *triumphi* can only be Octavian's three successive victory parades of 13, 14, and 15 August 29 BC. And just as the *imperator*'s name is not used here, it is also missing in Tibullus 1.10.67–68, verses which probably allude to the closing of the temple of Janus in 29 BC:[13]

At nobis, Pax alma, veni spicamque teneto,
profluat et pomis candidus ante sinus.

In contrast to Tibullus, Horace explicitly styles Octavian the victor after Actium: in *Epod.* 9, which he published about 29 BC, he relives the situation that found him and Maecenas, both apparently eye-witnesses to the naval battle, standing on board one of the ships directly involved in the action, and waiting anxiously for the outcome. The epode begins with a question (1–4):

Quando repostum Caecubum ad festas dapes
victore laetus Caesare
tecum sub alta – sic Iovi gratum – domo,
beate Maecenas, bibam …?

Three or four years later, Horace offers his own answer to this in his famous Ode 1.37, a poem which was written in 26 / 25 BC,[14] but is set in the year 30 BC, with the poet passing in review Rome's political situation after the death in August of Cleopatra, and calling for a celebration (1–5):

Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
pulsanda tellus, nunc Saliaribus
ornare pulvinar deorum
tempus erat dapibus, sodales.

antehac nefas depromere Caecubum …

[12] Knox makes a compelling case for reading *ac* for *at* in l. 7 and *portabit* for *portabat* in l. 8. The triumphs celebrated by Octavian and Messalla are, as Tibullus writes (very obviously echoing Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*), said to have been prophesied by the Parcae; that too can be seen to signal that the *puer* is meant to be Caesar's heir.

[13] Cairns (1999) 230.

[14] Hutchinson (2002).

Not long before the *Epodes* were published, Octavian had appeared as *victor* at the end of Virgil's *Georgics* (4.559–62):

> *Haec super arvorum cultu pecorumque canebam*
> *et super arboribus, Caesar dum magnus ad altum*
> *fulminat Euphraten bello victorque volentes*
> *per populos dat iura viamque affectat Olympo.*

It is likely that Horace is taking up that theme in *C.* 1.37. I would argue that the poet who had sung the praises in *Ecl.* 8 of the triumphant but not-to-be-named *imperator* now provides his friend with, so to speak, a licence to use the name in a similar context.

At the beginning of his didactic poem, Virgil ends his twelve-god address by introducing Octavian as a thirteenth divinity (*Geo.* 1.24–25):

> *Tuque adeo, quem mox quae sint habitura deorum*
> *concilia incertum est, … Caesar …*

When Virgil then goes on to list the jurisdictions from which the *imperator* will be able to choose once immortalised – the lands or the seas or, by becoming a new sign of the zodiac, the heavens (25–39) – his thoughts must be taken as a continuation of *Ecl.* 4.15 and its mention of the *deum vita* in store for the *puer*. Coming to the end of the apostrophe, Virgil asks Octavian for his support with the work now undertaken, for the kind of assistance, that is, conventionally granted *e.g.* by a Muse (40: *da facilem cursum atque audacibus adnue coeptis*). Livy is possibly alluding to this at the end of his *praefatio*, when he writes: *cum bonis potius ominibus votisque et precationibus deorum dearumque, si, ut poetis, nobis quoque mos esset, libentius inciperemus, ut orsis tantum operis successus prosperos darent*. He is, it seems, all but saying that he is emphatically not addressing himself to Octavian / Augustus.

The end of *Geo.* 1 sees Virgil urgently entreating the gods that the *imperator* be in a position to intervene. Although the work was published after Actium, the poet is still afraid here that the civil war may not be over yet (498–501):

> *Di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater,*
> *quae Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia servas,*
> *hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo*
> *ne prohibete.*

Readers who, like me, believe Octavian to be the *iuvenis* of *Ecl.* 1.42 may rightly feel some self-satisfaction at finding the *imperator* labelled a *iuvenis* here, and will possibly even allow themselves their own little triumph when, as we shall see below, Virgil talks of Augustus at one point in the *Aeneid* as a *vir*. Clearly the sequence "one-time *puer* turned *iuvenis* in the *Eclogues* – *iuvenis* in the *Georgics* – *vir* in the *Aeneid*" represents the three-phase rise from bucolic verse through didactic poetry to epic.[15]

Right in the middle[16] of this triad – it is famously included in Virgil's epitaph[17] as the succinct *pascua rura duces* – the poet declares, at the beginning of *Geo.* 3, that he is going to present a work about Octavian's deeds, albeit announcing this not explicitly, but allegorically: he plans, he says, to erect a temple on the banks of the Mincius, the river that flows through his own native Mantua (13), and in it the *imperator* is to be enthroned (16), with the great doors showing battles and Roman heroism (26–27). The consensus of opinion (or something very close to it) is that the allegory, as it were, prefigures the poet's *Aeneid*, and there is indeed one very persuasive argument in support of that – the programmatic pictorials for the temple, Virgil says, will depict more than battles and victories (34–36):

> *Stabunt et Parii lapides, spirantia signa,*
> *Assaraci proles demissaeque ab Iove gentis*
> *nomina, Trosque parens et Troiae Cynthius*[18] *auctor.*

If Virgil is alluding here to the Trojan epic he plans yet to write, he does not explicitly say as much, and that would be an omission rather reminiscent of the youth-boy-*imperator* guessing game created for readers in *Eclogues* 1, 4, and 8.

While Virgil is announcing allegorically his intended glorification of Augustus' deeds, Horace, in turn, is being asked by the lawyer Trebatius to write a work devoted to the same subject, a suggestion, or rather challenge, voiced at the beginning of the first poem in *Satires* 2, which was published after the Battle of Actium. Horace, however, declines (10–20):

> *'... aude*
> *Caesaris invicti res dicere, multa laborum*
> *praemia laturus'. 'Cupidum, pater optime, vires*
> *deficiunt. Neque enim quivis horrentia pilis*

[15] See Farrell (2002) and Putnam (2010) on this threefold progression. In the second book of *Epistles*, Horace addresses himself in three stages to the *vir* Augustus, the *iuvenis* Florus, and the *pueri* of Calpurnius Piso (see Holzberg, 2009).

[16] See Kyriakidis & De Martino (2004) on the significance of work and book middles for various Roman poets.

[17] See now Kahane (2017).

[18] Just as Apollo appears here in connection with Octavian, so too is he associated with the *puer* in *Ecl.* 4.17.

agmina nec fracta pereuntis cuspide Gallos
aut labentis equo describit volnera Parthi.'
'Attamen et iustum poteras et scribere fortem,
Scipiadam ut sapiens Lucilius.' 'Haud mihi dero,
cum res ipsa feret: nisi dextro tempore Flacci
verba per attentam non ibunt Caesaris aurem,
cui male si palpere, recalcitrat undique tutus.'

This helps us to understand why the poets so obviously held back when the *imperator* was in play: he might, or so Horace worries, react less than graciously, indeed almost violently, to overly direct tributes inopportunely paid. Thus Horace confines himself in his second book of *Satires* to merely using Octavian's expected defeat of the Parthians as the vague future date with which Tiresias opens his prophecy in 5.62–64:

'Tempore quo iuvenis Parthis horrendus, ab alto
demissum genus Aenea, tellure marique
magnus erit ...'

Once again the *imperator* remains unnamed, referred to instead as *iuvenis*, as he quite certainly is in Virgil's *Geo.* 1.500 and very probably also in *Ecl.* 1.42.

In declining to eulogize Octavian's deeds, Horace is bringing into play the Callimachean motif of *recusatio*,[19] and Propertius, who in his first book of elegies – it was published soon after Actium – only mentions the *imperator* once (in 21.7),[20] follows Horace's precedent at the beginning of his second *liber*, which dates from around 24 BC. There, in 1.17–18, 25, 39–42, Propertius says to Maecenas:

Quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus ...
bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris ...
Sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.

[19] Wimmel (1960), still the most thorough study of this motif.

[20] The poet does complain in elegies 1.21 and 22 about the consequences of the *bellum Perusinum* (fought in the winter of 41 / 40 BC), but it is impossible to determine whether he sided with Octavian or with L. Antonius, or whether he actually took any side at all.

On 13 January 27 BC, not long before the publication of Propertius' book 2, Octavian formally declared the civil wars over, had himself charged by the Senate with the duties of a *princeps* and, three day later, accepted the honour of the title Augustus. However, while peace reigned at home, Rome was still under threat from foreign nations, and so, in the second poem of *Odes* 1, published only shortly after 13 January 27 BC,[21] Horace wonders which god the Roman people can appeal to for help with their "collapsing" empire, considers several immortals, then finally comes down in favour of Mercury. He combines this pondering with a variant of the "mystery identity" guessing game: this time, we are presented with a "real" *deus absconditus*, the suggestion being that the son of Maia should come down to earth disguised as Augustus – naturally again a youthful one, since the messenger of the gods is himself a *iuvenis*. And here we have the only passage in books 1–3 of the *Odes* where Horace addresses the *princeps* directly, or rather, as we may reasonably conclude from the poet's previous restraint in the face of Octavian, *dares* to address him (41–52):

> *sive mutata iuvenem figura*
> *ales in terris imitaris, almae*
> *filius Maiae, patiens vocari*
> *Caesaris ultor,*
>
> *serus in caelum redeas diuque*
> *laetus intersis populo Quirini,*
> *neve te nostris vitiis iniquum*
> *ocior aura*
>
> *tollat. Hic magnos potius triumphos,*
> *hic ames dici pater atque princeps,*
> *neu sinas Medos equitare inultos*
> *te duce, Caesar.*

It seems to me characteristic of Horace's so often very subtle Callimachean *lusus* that, in a certain sense, he has his readers play the guessing game again in a later poem, hiding Augustus there too. In *C.* 2.7,[22] we are briefly left to wonder who it was who pardoned Horace's friend Pompeius almost twenty years after he had fought at Philippi on Brutus' side (1–5):

[21] Hutchinson (2002).
[22] On this poem see Moles (1987).

O saepe mecum tempus in ultimum
deducte Bruto militiae duce,
quis te redonavit Quiritem
dis patriis Italoque caelo,

Pompei, meorum prime sodalium …?

Caesar's renowned *clementia* was exercised in this case by his adopted heir, of course, and that is implied in the style of these lines, where the back (dark) vowel *u* in the two verses which refer to Philippi and Brutus is superseded by the front (bright) *i* in ll. 3–4. One beneficiary of this *clementia* was Horace quite soon after Philippi, and he represents that in ll. 13–14 as a Homeric tableau, the hero – even if Horace the ῥίψασπις was himself more of an anti-hero – being snatched to safety in the midst of battle by a god:

me per hostis Mercurius celer
denso paventem sustulit aere …

And why does the poet pick Mercury as his "rescue god" although Homer assigns the latter no such σωτήρ role? Not only because this divinity is Horace's guardian-in-the-sky, but also because he has already been asked in *C.* 1.2 to intervene and come to the rescue in the guise of Augustus.[23]

Gradually, then, the Augustan poets see the *iuvenis* who, as already visible in *Ecl.* 1.42, embodies the element of *iuvare* (the accepted etymology of *iuvenis* at the time),[24] as a helper, in the sense of "saviour", and thus a god revered as such. To that end the youth must naturally become a *vir* now, and Horace therefore has to ask at the beginning of *C.* 1.12, with a lofty Pindaric touch:

Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri
tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?
quem deum?

This poem consists of fifteen stanzas structured as five triads. The first triad (1–12), in which the poet expands the question he has begun to ask the Muse in l. 1, is followed by a triad on

[23] First noted in Zgoll (2004) 191.

[24] On this see most recently Bing (2016), who uses the popular etymological explanation *iuvenis / iuvare* to argue persuasively that Virgil's helper *deus* in *Ecl.* 1 is an allusion to Lucretius' representation of Epicurus, whose name means "helper", as "divine".

Jupiter and four other gods (13–24); the third and fourth stanza groups talk about various Greek and Roman heroes from Hercules to Julius Caesar (25–48), then, in the final triad (49–60), Horace tells us who the *vir* is: Augustus.[25] The first of the last three stanzas creates a direct connection between its addressee Jupiter and the *princeps* – as the god reigns on high, so Augustus on earth (49–52):

> *Gentis humanae pater atque custos,*
> *orte Saturno, tibi cura magni*
> *Caesaris fatis data: tu secundo*
> *Caesare regnes.*

Reversing the man-hero-god sequence seemingly established in ll. 1–3, the poet lets all lead up to the man and, at the end of the ode, places an entire triad of stanzas centred around him and only him. By thus associating him in one poetic breath with gods and heroes, Horace, like Ovid, pre-eminently steeped in Virgil, evokes ll. 15–17 of the fourth *Eclogue*. Indeed, I would even say that the entire *C.* 1.12 can be read as a prodigious extension of Virgil's three verses (15–18):

> *Ille deum vitam accipiet divisque videbit*
> *permixtos heroas*[26] *et ipse videbitur illis*
> *pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem.*

If I am right here, then I and my reading of *puer* as Octavian are in sooth among goodly company.[27]

Being, as it were, on the crest of a wave, I can also now point to what I see as the distinct possibility that Horace's *Quem virum aut heroa* (*C.* 1.12.1) is alluded to by Virgil with his *Arma virumque cano* (*Aen.* 1.1). These three words open the long-awaited grand epic, and whoever heard or read them, as yet unaware of what the *Aeneid* held in store, was surely supposed to be instantly reminded both of the temple envisaged at the beginning of *Geo.* 3 and of the three stanzas giving prominence to a *vir* in Horace's ode – associations which would

[25] Still essential reading on the ode: Schmidt (1984).

[26] See also *Ecl.* 4.26 *heroum laudes*, there linked with *facta parentis* (suggested to me by Luke Houghton).

[27] Augustus is probably also the *vir iustus et tenax propositi* with whom Horace opens the third of the "Roman Odes" (3.3). Heinze already suspected as much in 1929 (= Heinze, 1972^4, 200), and I would add that, after the *vir iustus et tenax propositi* characterisation, the poet implicitly predicts, in the third stanza, that the ruler will also join the ranks of bygone heroes such as Pollux and Hercules, etc. – here the reader is once more reminded of *divisque videbit permixtos heroas* – because he is a master of the same *ars* as them, and that here, for the first time in his work, Horace calls the *imperator* Augustus (l. 11). Janka (2000) tries to identify the *vir* with Virgil, but I find his arguments less than convincing.

lead readers to assume that the man Virgil now wanted to sing about was Augustus.[28] Even if the fourth word in the arms-and-the-man line, *Troiae*, does admittedly very soon betray that said *vir* is going to be Augustus' Trojan forefather, we do nevertheless find ourselves, a mere 256 verses later, reading the first of three glimpses into the future[29] that show us the *princeps*-to-come and his exceptional deeds. And here, at the very latest, we get it: Aeneas is meant to prefigure Augustus. Then, however, in ll. 286–96 of this prophecy from the mouth of Jupiter, we puzzle once more:

> *'Nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar,*
> *imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris,*
> *Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo.*
> *Hunc tu olim caelo, spoliis Orientis onustum,*
> *accipies secura; vocabitur hic quoque votis.*
> *Aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis.*
> *Cana Fides et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus*
> *iura dabunt; dirae ferro et compagibus artis*
> *claudentur Belli portae; Furor impius intus,*
> *saeva sedens super arma, et centum vinctus aenis*
> *post tergum nodis fremet horridus ore cruento'.*

Which Caesar does Jupiter mean here? Those who, like myself, take it to be Augustus argue for one that ll. 291–96 clearly refer to the *princeps*'s closing of the temple of Janus in 29 BC. But the *tum* in l. 291 could also point to a time *later* than the period alluded to in ll. 286–90, and everything that Jupiter says there is true both of the dictator and of his adopted son. Considering that scholars who specialise in Augustan literature still cannot agree which of the two men Virgil is talking about here,[30] we ought perhaps to deduce from the previous shrouding of Augustus' person we have seen above that Virgil deliberately leaves the question indeterminate. He very likely hopes that the puzzle will cause us to muster up the *res gestae* of both, especially as the younger *Caesar* picked up where the older one left off. After all, Virgil does say in l. 17 of the fourth *Eclogue* (which I make so bold as to cite one more time): the boy *pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem*.

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[28] The entire proem is virtually teeming with allusions that are often puzzlingly coded. The first and last letters of ll. 1–4, for example, can be read βουστροφηδόν as the acrostich A STILO MAR V (Castelletti, 2012), while ll. 1–7 are made up of of forty-eight words, exactly as many, that is, as there are in books in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* together (Lansing, 2008).

[29] The other two: 6.756–886 and 8.626–728.

[30] Most recently thrashed out by Zieske (2010).

In the second glimpse of the future offered in the *Aeneid*, the parade of heroes in the sixth book (756–846), Caesar and Augustus appear as two clearly differentiated figures. And now Anchises, the commentator during this parade in the Underworld of Rome's future greats, uses words which make it sound as though he is about to offer the solution to the conundrum posed by *Ecl.* 1 with its *deus* and *iuvenis* and by *Ecl.* 4 with its *puer* (791–95):[31]

> *Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti saepius audis,*
> *Augustus Caesar, divi genus, aurea condet*
> *saecula qui rursus Latio regnata per arva*
> *Saturno quondam, super et Garamantas et Indos*
> *proferet imperium …*

Back in 29 BC, Horace had bemoaned at the beginning of *Epod.* 16 the way in which the scourge of civil war was now affecting a second generation, all the more lamentable – as the allusion there to Virgil's fourth *Eclogue* implies – because this was happening in spite of the *gens aurea* proclaimed around 35 BC in that same poem (l. 29):

> *Altera iam teritur bellis civilibus aetas*
> *suis et ipsa Roma viribus ruit …*

Now, however, in the era predicted by Anchises (*i.e.* the late 20s BC), the *puer* has become a *vir* and the *aurea saecula* can finally begin. The double deictic *hic* used by Virgil in *Aen.* 6.791 signals – much like an epiphany-heralding *ecce* – that the Augustan poets are now no longer supposed to represent the *princeps* as they would a *deus absconditus*, but instead should eulogize him as Σωτήρ,[32] *pater patriae*, and future god. Thus we find that, in the surviving Augustan poetry from the period after the publication of the *Aeneid*, panegyric predominates when mention is made of the *princeps*: in Horace's case above all in the *Carmen saeculare* (17 BC) and in book 4 of the *Odes*[33] (11 / 10 BC), but also here and there in both books of the *Epistles* (19 / 18 and 11 / 10 BC); in Propertius it is evident in the fourth book of his elegies (shortly after 16 BC) and in Ovid at the end of the *Metamorphoses* (around AD 8), at more than a few points in the *Fasti* (also *circa* AD 8) and frequently in the exile poems (between

[31] Luke Houghton *per litteras*: "Might not the reference to Augustus as *vir* in a context already evocative of the fourth *Eclogue* also hint at the fulfillment of the predication at Verg. *Ecl.* 4.37, *hinc, ubi iam fermata virum te fecerit aetas* … ? (There is also *quae sit poteris cognoscere VIRtus* at *Ecl.* 4.27 and *pacatum reget patriis VIRtutibus orbem* at *Ecl.* 4.17, but these are perhaps less compelling)".

[32] On Aeneas as the prefiguration of this role see Noonan (2007).

[33] In the twelfth of the poems there, Horace welcomes as guest from the Underworld his friend Virgil, calling him a *iuvenum nobilium cliens*, a subtle allusion to *Ecl.* 1.42.

AD 8 and 14). For the banished poet writing in Tomi and, in a moment of longing for Italy, as he expresses the wish that the world of Virgil's *Eclogues* could be moved to the far-off Black Sea where he must now live, Augustus has changed – forty years after the appearance of the earliest Augustan poetry – from an *otia*-securing, helping *deus* to a wrathful god willing merely to spare Ovid's life.[34] But that is another story.

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[34] On the shift in meaning of the term *otia* in Ovid's exile poems, see Holzberg (2016). When the poet describes the fact that he is still alive as "a gift from the god" (*munus dei*, *Trist*. 1.1.20), he is quite evidently referring to Augustus and alluding at the same time to *Ecl*. 1.6 (*O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit*).

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