Horace as an Advocate for Moderation in *Odes* 1.4 and 1.11

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| **1**. ***docere*** *debitum est, delectare honorarium, permovere necessarium* (*De Optimo Genere Oratorum* 1.4).[[1]](#footnote-1) | **to teach** is an obligation, to please is complimentary, to move is necessary. |
| **2.** ***Rectius vives****, Licini, neque altum*  *semper* ***urgendo*** *neque, dum procellas*  *cautus horrescis, nimium* ***premendo***  *Litus iniquum*; (*Odes* 2.10.1-4). [[2]](#footnote-2) | **You will live more correctly**, Licinius,  **by** not always **pushing** the deep, nor,  while cautious you shudder at storms,  **by pressing** the hostile shore too much; |
| **3.** *aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae*  *aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae.* (*Ars Poetica* 333-335).[[3]](#footnote-3) | whether poets wish to benefit or please or speak the delights and proper things of life at the same time. |
| **4.** *Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni,*  *trahuntque siccas machinae carinas,*  *ac neque* ***iam*** *stabulis gaudet pecus aut arator igni,*  *nec prata canis albicant pruinis.*  ***Iam*** *Cytherea choros ducit Venus imminente luna,* 5  *iunctaeque Nymphis Gratiae decentes*  *alterno terram quatiunt pede, dum gravis Cyclopum*  *Vulcanus ardens visit officinas.*  ***Nunc*** *decet aut viridi nitidum caput impedire myrto*  *aut flore, terrae quem ferunt solutae;* 10  ***nunc*** *et in umbrosis Fauno decet immolare lucis,*  *seu poscat agna sive malit haedo.*  ***Pallida Mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas***  ***regnumque turris****. O beate Sesti,*  *vitae summa brevis spem* ***nos*** *vetat incohare longam.* 15  ***Iam*** *te premet nox fabulaeque Manes*  *et domus exilis Plutonia; quo simul mearis,*  *nec regna vini sortiere talis,*  *nec tenerum Lycidan mirabere, quo calet iuventus*  ***nunc*** *omnis et mox virgines tepebunt.* 20  (*Odes* 1.4) | Harsh winter is melted with the welcome change of spring and  of Favonus,  and machines drag the dry keels,  And no **longer** does the cattle rejoice in the stables or the  farmer at his hearth,  nor are the meadows white with white hoar frost.  **Now** Cytherean Venus leads dances, with the moon  threatening overhead,  and comely Graces joined with Nymphs  shake the ground with an alternate foot, when burning Vulcan  inspects the mighty workshops of the Cyclopes.  **Now** it is fitting to encircle a shining head either with green  myrtle  or with a flower, which the melted earth bears;  **now** also it is fitting for Faunus to sprinkle meal in the  shadowy groves,  whether he would seek to sacrifice a lamb or prefer to sacrifice  a kid.  **Pale Death knocks with an impartial foot on the huts of the**  **poor**  **and the towers of the rich.** O happy Sestius,  The greatest span of life forbids **us** to begin a long hope.  **Soon** night will press you and the storied Shades  And the bleak house of Plutonia; where, as soon as you go,  Neither will you obtain by lot kingships of wine with dice,  Nor will you marvel at soft Lycidas, because of whom all the  youth **now** are hot and soon virgins will grow warm. |
| **5.** *Tu ne* ***quaesieris****, scire nefas, quem mihi, quem tibi*  *finem di dederint, Leuconoe, nec Babylonios*  ***temptaris*** *numeros. Ut melius, quidquid erit, pati,*  *seu pluris hiemes seu tribuit Iuppiter ultimam,*  *quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare* 5  *Tyrrhenum:* ***sapias****, vina* ***liques****, et spatio brevi*  *spem longam* ***reseces****. Dum loquimur, fugerit invida*  *aetas:* ***carpe*** *diem, quam minimum credula postero.*  (*Odes* 1.11) | You should not **ask**, it is wrong to know, what end  the gods give to me and what end they give to you,  Leuconoë, nor **should you experiment** with Babylonian numbers. As it is better to endure whatever will be,  whether Jupiter has granted many winters or if this is the last, which now weakens the Tyrrhenian Sea with opposing rocks: **may you be wise, may you strain** the wine, and because of life’s brief span, **may you cut back** on long hopes. As we speak, envious time  flees: **pluck** the day, trusting as little as possible in the next one. |

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1. Latin text from Hubbell 1949. Translations are my own. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Latin text from Garrison 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Latin text from Rudd 1989. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)