The last line of Horace's poem apparently means more than it says. The poem is evidently not long; it is shorter than the four poems that precede it in the book (121, 134, 142, 143 lines) and the one that follows (131 lines). The reference to its length cannot be read simply as a statement of fact.

1. Horace stops in Serm. 1,1 and 1,3 lest the poem seem long (lam satis est. ne me Crispini scrinia lippit compilasse putes, verbum non amplius addam 1,1,120f., Ne longum faciam ... 1,3,137). When he stops in 1,5 he says that the poem is long, because, he implies, the journey was long; but the last line may convey more than an apology that is too late. The audience was aware of the political purpose at the end of the journey; Horace stops short of that, just as in the course of the poem he has said only so much of it that he himself seems remote from it, and at the same time he has indicated that success in it was certain already.

2. Horace's treatment of his journey to Brundisium can be referred to Lucilius' treatment of his journey to Sicily (97ff.M). Horace in Serm. 1,4 criticises Lucilius for writing too much (9ff.; cf. 1,10,9f.,50ff.); and his own style is more compressed than Lucilius', where they can be compared. His treatment of his journey, in this place in the book next after his criticism of Lucilius, can be seen as a demonstration of the principles he had expressed in his criticism. The last line of the poem may be interpreted then as an ironic allusion to Lucilius' prolixity, as Horace saw it, whether specifically in his treatment of his journey to Sicily (the length of which is unknown), or more generally.

3. The last line of the poem defines the form of the poem ironically, as what it is not, in terms of size. The first lines define the subject in terms of size, that is, seriousness: Egressum magna me accepit Aricia Roma/hospitio modico 9ff.); from great Rome to small Aricia, and to the other small towns along the way. If the definition of size at the end of the poem is referred to that at the beginning, it appears that the length of the poem is to be understood as appropriate to the subject.

In the course of the poem a number of events are treated in terms of epic or are referred to the subjects of epic. The night of the passage along the canal, and the next morning, are introduced as if the events to follow were of epic importance (9f.,20f.); and the encounter of Sarmentus and Messius is introduced as if they were warriors in an epic (51ff.). Canusium was founded by Diomedes, who is described as fortis; Horace himself was not as heroic about the bread and the water (91f.). Some episodes can be referred to episodes in the Odyssey: games, in which Horace did not participate (48f.); someone who could have represented the Cyclops in a pantomimic dance (63ff.); a woman, who was not as much interested in Horace as he had thought (82ff.), a wonder, which did not impress him (97ff.). The first sentence of Horace's narrative resembles the first sentence of Odysseus' narrative of his wanderings: Egressum magna me accepit Aricia Roma/hospitio modico (Iff.), 'Ιλιοθεν με φέρων άνεμως κιόνεσσι πέλασσεν, 'Ισμάρω (Hom. Od. 9,39f.). The poem is thus introduced as if for comparison with Odysseus' account of his wanderings. The last line may be interpreted then as an
allusion to the length of Odysseus' narrative, a by-word for the foolish and long-winded story.\textsuperscript{14}

But the use of epic themes and epic language in the poem is not, or not only, parody of epic itself, but also colours the subject of the poem in those places, ironically, by allusion to what it is not. This irony does not extend to all the events of the journey;\textsuperscript{15} but it recurs through the poem, and in those places the allusion to epic emphasises by contrast that an event or a situation is banal.\textsuperscript{16} The last line may be referred to this treatment of the subject in terms of epic. Scale and subject in poetry are related in Callimachean literary theory,\textsuperscript{17} which is evoked by Horace in his criticism of Lucilius in Serm. 1,4,11;\textsuperscript{18} and in Serm. 1,5 length and subject, or parts of it, are represented to the audience with the same ironic exaggeration. Without that irony, longum ... melos is used of a poem that is actually long on a subject that is actually serious in Carm. 3,4,2.\textsuperscript{19}

The phrase longae ... viae itself is perhaps mock-heroic. The journey was indeed long, if it took between twelve and seventeen days,\textsuperscript{20} for it could be made in nine, or even in five.\textsuperscript{21} Horace describes some stages as seeming long in the conditions (explicitly, 94f.). But he does not record the passing of the days at all punctiliously.\textsuperscript{22} Against the background of Odysseus' journey his journey does not seem long.\textsuperscript{23}

Notes

1. Cf. M. Puelma Piwonka, Lucilius and Kallimachos (Frankfurt am Main, 1949), 89, n.2; Horace' s tone is more formal in Epist. 2,1,4f. (see C.O.Brink, Horace on Poetry. Epistles Book II (Cambridge, 1982), ad loc.).

2. Cf. J.C. Orelli-J.G.Baiter-W. Mewes (Berlin, 1892), ad loc.


5. Porphyrio ad v . 1.


7. K. Sallmann in Udo Reinhardt and K.S. (eds), Musa locosa . Andreas Thierfelder zum siebzigsten Geburtstag (Hildesheim, 1974), 182f., Classen (n.6), 341.


10. Further details in Sallmann (n.7), 198ff.


13. Ehlers (n.3), 80f.


15. See Ehlers (n.3), 74.

16. Ehlers interprets the use of epic differently (n.3), 78f.; on Hom. Od. 9.39f. see 80f.

17. Call. Aet. fr.1Pf.; see Brink (n.1) on Epist. 2,1,257-8.


22. See Sallmann (n.7), 187, Ehlers (n.3), 73.